ANIMAG

THE MAGAZINE OF JAPANESE ANIMATION

$5.00

12

Yotoden
Five Star Stories
Votoms

0 37419 75613 6 08

RIDING BEAN

In Chicago, ace courier Bean Bandit rules the road, and operates on both sides of the law. If a cargo absolutely positively has to be there NOW, Bean's your man -- for a price. Want to ensure that the getaway from your latest heist goes smoothly? No problem -- but it will cost you . Bean's latest cargo is a 10 year old girl who is worth 50 grand when delivered home. What he doesn't know is that she has already been kidnapped, and he's about to be framed for the snatch. Meanwhile, the real kidnappers are making off with the $2,000,000 in ransom money! Will the Bean discover the ruse in time and get the money himself? Will he evade Inspector Percy's relentless pursuit? No matter what, the Chicago Police Department is going to have a huge auto repair bill! Riding Bean is the latest creation of Sonoda Kenichi, acclaimed character designer of Bubblegum Crisis and Gall Force. This is one Anime that doesn't run out of gas! Don't miss it!

AnimEigo

P.O. BOX 989, WILMINGTON N.C. 28402. (919) 799-1501

$34.95 VISA / MC

CONTENTS

ISSUE No. 12

8 Yotoden

In the concluding chapter of C.I.C. Victor's thrilling fable of 16th century Japan, the three sacred blades must unite to defeat evil as vengeful ninjas battle

18 Five Star Stories

Mamoru Nagano's masterwork continues with Part Two in the story of Clotho, the Sleeping Witch

OTHER FEATURES

5 Animation Update

- *The Heroic Legend of Arslan*
- *Silent Möbius*
- *Gundam 0080, "Stardust Memory"*

14 Mongo's Manga

Terazawa Buichi of Space Cobra fame brings us the adventures of Gokuu, future Tokyo's bare-chested cop with a cybernetic eye

24 Sounds of the New Earth—The Music and Vision of Ryuichi Sakamoto

A look at the Academy Award-winning composer

28 Armored Trooper Votoms

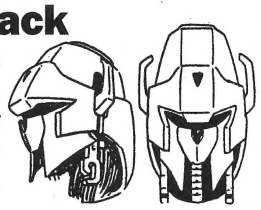
The odyssey of Chirico Cuvie as he travels through a galaxy torn by a hundred years of war. Second in a two-part article

34 Anime Ja Nai

The dying gasps of your favorite (dead) anime characters painstakingly collected and transcribed

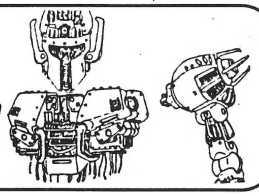
36 Anime Flashback

From the creative team who would later bring us Zeta Gundam, *the show that stormed the animation scene in the early '80s,* Heavy Metal L-Gaim



42 Mecha File

Featuring the title mecha of Heavy Metal L-Gaim



49 Animated Plastic

Learn how to build the latest creation in the garage-kit craze, the soft vinyl kit

STAFF

Publisher
Jeffry Tibbetts

Assistant to the Publisher
Hilary Ayer

Editor
Trish Ledoux

Art Director
Tony Del Grosso

Assistant Editors
Dana Kurtin
Toshifumi Yoshida

Copy Editor
Annette Ledoux

Layout and Design
Matthew Anacleto
Tony Del Grosso

Translators
Takayuki Karahashi
Yoshiyuki Karahashi
Toshifumi Yoshida

Japanese Correspondence
Toshifumi Yoshida

Fan Correspondence
Dana Fong

Cover
Kenichi Ohnuki
Courtesy of *Newtype*

Art
Schulhoff Tam
Pg. 8
Karl Altstaetter
Pg. 24
Tim Eldred and Steve Krueger
Pg. 28

Editorial Offices
Animag, Inc.
P.O. Box 31492
San Francisco, CA 94131

Subscription Address
ANIMAG
P.O. Box 23651
Oakland, CA 94623

The Sentry Box
2047 34th Avenue
SW, Calgary Alberta T2T 2C4

Pacific Rim Publishing Company
Jeffry Tibbetts, President
Executive Offices
3833 Lake Shore Avenue
Oakland, CA 94610

ANIMAG, ISSN 014596860 is published quarterly by Pacific Rim Publishing Company. Subscription rates are $18.00 for six issues in the U.S., APOs and FPOs; $21.00 for six issues in Canada; $36.00 for six issues elsewhere via airmail. All payments must be made in U.S. funds drawn on account in the U.S. or in a postal money order. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ANIMAG, P.O. Box 23651, Oakland, CA 94623. ANIMAG is a publication of Pacific Rim Publishing Company. all rights reserved. The following copyrights and trademarks are the property of their respective owners: Yotoden © C.I.C. Victor Video; Five Star Stories © Toys Press Inc.; Heavy Metal L-Gaim, Armored Trooper Votoms © Sunrise; Gokuu Midnight Eye © Buichi Terasawa.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

The Rise of the Translating Writers, Part Two

Know that bit about your words coming back to haunt you?

Readers of this space will recall an earlier editorial in which I take to task those newly voguish writers who call themselves "translators" without benefit of actually speaking the language they profess to be translating from. "Why," I wrote, "is it so common to find non-Japanese speaking persons listed as translators? Has the profession of translator somehow become so glamorous that everyone is clamoring to join the ranks, justified or not?"

Guess who just joined the ranks.

It's true. Your Humble Narrator, defender of diction, protector of persiflage, recently signed with U.S. Renditions to provide Japanese-to-English translations of various animated features for the purpose of subtitling same.

And just what, you may be asking, recommends her to the position? Her fluency? Her experience? Her charming personality?

Actually, it's a little of each. As for fluency, I'm not quite up to mastery but I have come a long way from "don't-touch-my-mustache" (that atrocious mnemonic for *doo itashimashite*, or "don't mention it" in English). Experience comes from the work I did on an English adaptation yet to see the light of day of a popular Japanese science fiction comic, and as for my charming personality . . . well, you'll just have to be the judge of that.

None of this would seem to merit yet another editorial were it not for the unanticipated event that I'd become one of those "translating writers" previously called to your kind attention. This places me in the unenviable position of having to justify myself to . . . myself.

Credit to his species and helpful ANIMAG reader David M. Langley writes in an attempt to explain —oh, here.

Dear Trish,

I m enjoying ANIMAG very much. You ve had an interesting diversity of articles and columns. I haven t been wild about each piece of anime you've covered, but that's to be expected, right?

The main reason I'm writing is to help you with the question you raised in your editorial for Issue No. 8. For most of the translated manga being published today, there are two people working on the translation. One is Japanese (or at least speaks Japanese), and the other is a non-Japanese speaking writer. The first provides a literal, word-for-word (not to mention dry-as-dust and confusing-as-heck) translation of the script into English. The second member of the team then renders this into more colloquial English. The artwork is flipped, the word balloons are changed to horizontal and ta-dah! an English manga is born.

The reason for calling this second person a translator is that writer implies the person who originally wrote the work, renderer sounds like what Ghengis Khan was in China, and colloquializer is just a bit unwieldy.

(By the way, the reason I know all this is because most American manga at one time or another prints an article in the back describing the whole process.) I hope this has helped cure any confusion you might have had.

Sincerely,

David M. Langley
B-Div USS *Stein*

With the exception of highly competent non-native speakers (Fred Schodt comes to mind) perfectly capable of beautiful translations all by themselves, it does seem as though many of the translations being done these days are produced by translating teams. (However, this doesn't preclude the possibility of both—or neither—members being native speakers.)

I have suggested previously that a person working from rough translation drafts is not really a translator but a writer working with one. In my first U.S. Renditions project, the *Appleseed* OAV, the "writer" is Masamune Shirow; the "script editor" is Robert Napton; and the native Japanese-speaking "translator" is Toshifumi Yoshida. If we're to take Langley's words to heart, avoiding such clunkers as "renderer" and "colloquializer," what's left for the second banana? What do you call *me*?

I guess you'd call me a translator. A tricky business, indeed.

Trish Ledoux
Editor

THE LARGEST JAPANESE ANIMATION GARAGE KIT SHOP IN THE U.S.
NEW GARAGE KITS COME IN REGULARLY.

B-CLUB GARAGE KIT

1/220	Kondo Marasai(Gundam)resin
1/144	Z Gustav(Gundam)resin
1/8	Four Murasame(Gundam)resin
1/144	RE-GZ Back Weapon System (Gundam) resin
1/144	New Gundam Full Armor Parts(Gundam) resin
1/144	Gundam MK-III (Gundam) resin
1/144	Musha Gundam (Gundam) resin
1/144	Qubley (gundam) resin
1/144	Wave Rider (Gundam) resin
1/100	Marasai (Gundam) resin
1/6	Christina McKenzie (Gundam) resin
1/75	Zuggok-E (Gundam) vinyl
1/75	GM Command (Gundam) vinyl
1/75	Gelgoog-J (Gundam) vinyl
N/S	Deformed Marasai (Gundam) resin
N/S	Deformed Z-Gundam (Gundam) resin
N/S	Deformed Zuggok-E (Gundam) resin
N/S	Deformed GM Command (Gundam) resin
N/S	Kaneda's Bike (Akira) resin

VOLKS GARAGE KIT

1/6	Sirene (Devilman) vinyl
1/220	Mobil Suit Quinmantha (Gundam) resin
N/S	Tetsujin 28 (Tetsujin 28) resin
1/12	Kiddy (Silent Mebius) resin
1/12	Katsumi (Silent Mebius) resin
1/12	Lebia (Silent Mebius) resin
1/12	Saiko Yuki (Silent Mebius) resin
1/100	Black Grad (5 Star Stories) resin
l/l00	Knight of Gold (5 Star Stories) resin
1/100	Led Mirage (5 Star Stories) resin
1/100	Vatshu (5 Star Stories) resin
1/100	Junchoon (5 Star Stories) resin
1/100	Cross Mirage (5 Star Stories) resin
l/144	Knight of Gold (5 Star Stories) resin
1/144	Led Mirage (5 Star Stories) resin

WAVE GARAGE KIT

1/100	Led Mirage (5 Star Stories) resin
1/100	Knight of Gold (5 Star Stories) resin
1/144	Air Barrel ME-2 (5 Star Stories) resin
1/20	EX-Garland (Megazone23 III) vinyl
1/8	Anis Farm (Borgman) resin
1/8	Phantom SWAT Miki (Borgman) resin
1/24	Super Thunder (Borgman) resin

MAX FACTORY GARAGE KIT

N/S	Ramotith (Guyver) vinyl
N/S	Vamore (Guyver) vinyl
N/S	Guyver II (Guyver) vinyl
1/6	Guyver I (Guyver) vinyl
1/6	Guyver II (Guyver) vinyl
1/6	GuyverIII (Guyver) vinyl
1/32	Servine (Dunbine) vinyl
1/32	Servine DX (Dunbine) vinyl
1/24	Shadow Flare (Blue Knight) vinyl
1/24	Berserga (Blue Knight) vinyl

REPPU GARAGE KIT

1/72	VF-4(Macross) vinyl
1/12	Misa Hayase (Macross) resin
1/12	Lynn Minmay (Macross) resin
1/48	Invit (Mospeada) resin
1/8	B-ko (Project A-ko) resin
1/8	C-ko (Project A-ko) resin
1/20	Phantom SWAT (Borgman) resin
1/20	Phantom SWAT II (Borgman) resin
1/20	Chuck (Borgman) resin
1/20	Anis Farm (Borgman) resin

FUKAYA GARAGE KIT

1/8	Kei (Dirty Pair) resin
1/8	Yuri (Dirty Pair) resin
1/4	Kei (Dirty Pair) vinyl
1/4	Yuri (Dirty Pair) vinyl
1/8	Barbara (Rush) resin
1/8	Diana (Rush) resin
1/8	Cynthia (Rush) resin
1/8	Alithia (Rush) resin
1/8	Alteria (Silent Mebius) resin
1/8	Katsumi (Silent Mebius) resin

MUSASHIYA GARAGE KIT

1/8	Anis Farm (Borgman) resin
1/8	Anis in mirrorland (Borgman) resin
1/8	Miki Katsura (Borgman) resin
1/8	Ryo Barotecter (Borgman) resin
1/8	Ranma (Ranma 1/2) resin
1/8	Akane (Ranma1/2) resin
1/8	Akane II (Ranma 1/2) resin
1/8	Shampoo (Ranma 1/2) resin
1/6	Neko Ranma (Ranma 1/2) resin
1/6	Shampoo (Ranma 1/2) resin

KOTOBUKIYA GARAGE KIT

1/35	Gunhed (Gunhed) resin
1/144	Super ZZ Gundam (Gundam) resin
1/100	A/FMSZ-007II Zeta (Gundam) resin
1/20	Hound (Venus Wars) resin
1/8	Althea (Good Morning Althea) resin
1/8	Althea II (Good Morning Althea) resin
1/8	Pai Thunder (Dangaioh) resin

GENERAL PRODUCTS GARAGE KIT

1/72	Airforce "Schiladow" (Oneamis)resin
1/72	Navy "Lonker" (Oneamis) resin
1/72	Spacy "Capsul" (Oneamis) resin
1/350	Led Mirage (5 Star Stories) metal
1/350	Black Grad (5 Star Stories) metal
1/350	Junchoon (5 Star Stories) metal
1/350	Belrin (5 Star Stories) metal
1/350	Knight of Gold (5 Star Stories) metal
1/350	Cross Mirage (5 Star Stories) metal
1/8	Noriko Takaya (Top Onerae) resin
1/8	Kazumi Amano (Top Onerae)resin
1/8	Yung Freud (Top Onerae)resin
1/200	Ariel C type (Ariel) resin
1/200	Ariel Hobby Japan DX(Ariel) resin
1/6	Bunny Girl (Daicon IV) vinyl

ZERO GARAGE KIT

1/12	Madox-Ol (Hobby Japan Orig.) resin

WRITE OR CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION.
WE ACCEPT AN ORDER BY VISA AND MASTERCARD.

PONY TOY GO-ROUND

420 E. 2nd Street Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 617-0058

KIMONO MY HOUSE

JAPANIMATION T-SHIRTS

SHIPPING INFORMATION

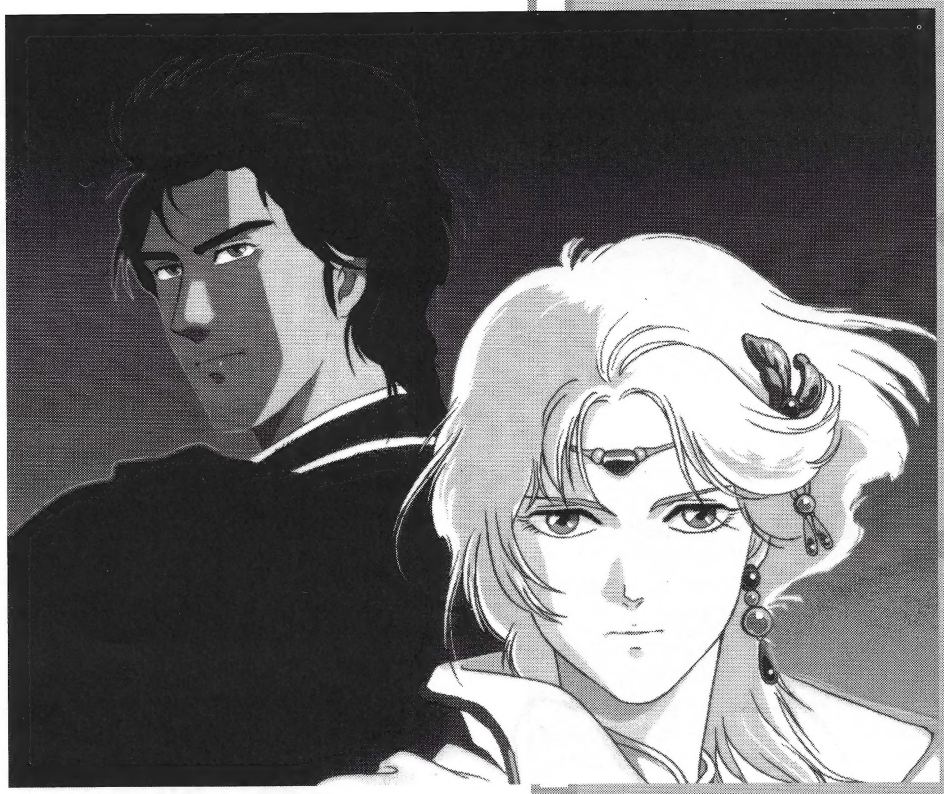
Japanimation T-shirts sizes M, L, XL
$17.00 each (includes shipping and handeling)
$4.00 additional for only C.O.D orders
California residents must add appropriate sales tax.
P.O. Box addresses are not acceptable.
Please send complete street address with ZIP code and phone number.

Send $2.00 for a complete catalouge for Japanimation and Sci Fi Toys.

Also Available Lensman, Robot Carnival, Gunbuster and Project A-Ko

ANIMATION UPDATE

The Heroic Legend of Arslan



The popular heroic fantasy novels of Yoshiki Tanaka (who also penned *Legend of the Galactic Heroes*) were originally considered too intricate to animate, especially due to the convoluted character relationships essential to the plot. However, Shochiku and Animate File decided to tackle the project and will release the first book, "Burning Kingdom," as a feature-length motion picture this summer.

The Heroic Legend of Arslan takes place in a land called Palse (which resembles mid-century Persia), a place rich in culture as well as gold. Palse's proud and powerful army of mounted soldiers protect the realm from harm until the 320th year of the Palse calendar, when forces from the rival country of Lusitania invade. The hero, a 14-year-old prince of Palse, goes to battle only to be cruelly betrayed by one of his father's officers. Abandoned on the battleground, Arslan is rescued by a loyal retainer, Daryuun. Together they return to Palse's capital only to find it ablaze. With his newfound allies, Daryuun, Nalsus, Gease and Geave, Arslan sets out to reclaim his country.

While Yoshitaka Amano (*Vampire Hunter D*) designed the original novel covers, Sachiko Kamimura (*City Hunter, Venus Wars*) has taken over the task of creating the characters for the film, as well as serving as animation director.

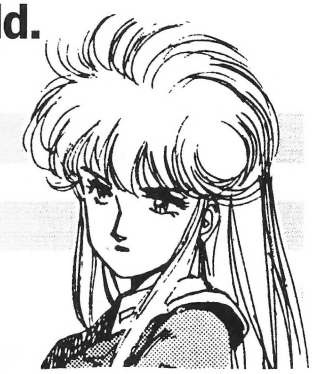
Silent Möbius

In 2028, demons emerge from the nearly completed orbital elevator near Tokyo Bay and the special task force AMP is assigned to the case. *Silent Möbius* tells the story of an elite police force, a unit of five woman officers, each with a unique ability which allows them to solve supernatural, paranormal and parapsychic disturbances in their futuristic, *Blade Runner*-like world.

Silent Möbius is based on the original comic of the same name by Kia Asamiya and is Shochiku's latest entry in the genre—the classic archetypal five-member team—established so long ago with Tatsunoko's *Science Ninja Team Gatchaman.* The 50-minute film is produced by Toei Doga; the executive producer is the legendary Haruki Kadokawa of *Heaven and Earth* fame. Screenplay, character design and direction is by Michitaka Kikuchi. *Silent Möbius* is double-billed with another Toei Doga production, *The Heroic Legend of Arslan*, both of which are scheduled for an August, 1991 release.

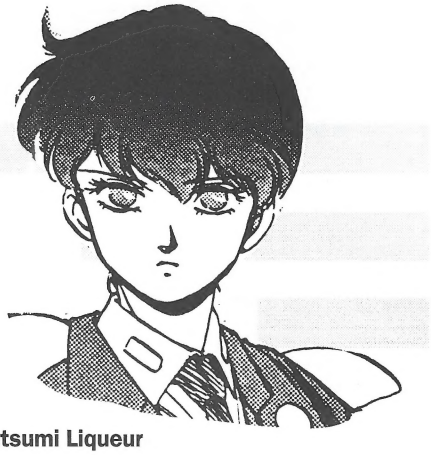
Characters

Yuki Saiko
Although Yuki's main job seems to be related more to the office than to the police, she does possess a limited psychic ability, including clairvoyance.

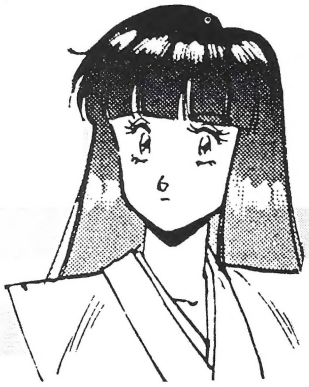


Lebia Maverick
In charge of data maintenance and mecha specialist of the group.

Rally Cheyenne
Group leader and founder of AMP. No one really knows her past or the extent of her powers.

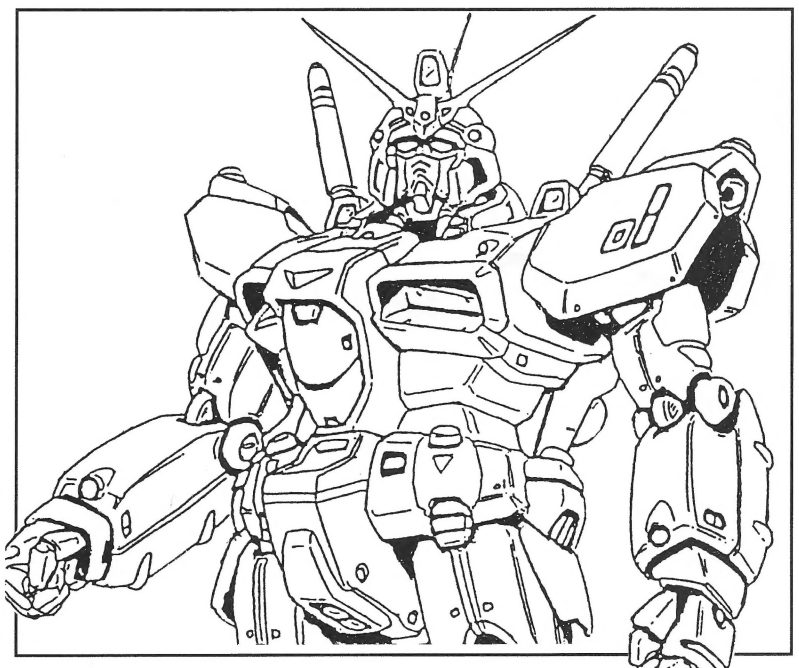


Katsumi Liqueur
AMP member possessing mystical powers passed down through her family. Katsumi has an amulet containing her father's essence which aids her in times of need.



Nami Yamigumo
Nami comes from a family of priests, and is the only one of her generation to have passed her family's rite of succession.

Kiddy Phenil
Although Kiddy has no psychic ability, she is a member of AMP because of her armored android body which makes her the "brick" of the all-female police department.



Gundam 0083 "Stardust Memory"

After the success of *Gundam 0800: War in the Pocket*, Sunrise is releasing a second, 26-episode OAV series.

Two years after the One-Year War a new battle begins. This time, the Earth Federation must combat the Delars Force, a small group of troops who remain loyal to Gilen Zabi and want to revive the Zion Empire. The main character, Koh Uraki, is a rank private and mobile suit test pilot at the Mobile Suit Research and Development Base in Australia. The secret base holds both the Gundam Test Unit I and the Test Unit II, the latter of which is stolen by Anavel Gato, a lieutenant in the Delars Force. Unfortunately, besides being an important prototype, the Test Unit II is armed with an experimental atomic bazooka. Now that the enemy has the prototype, it will be the first time that Gundam will fight Gundam . . .

The first 55-minute volume is scheduled for a May, 1991 release by Sunrise. Two episodes will be available per tape. Japan-based fans who purchased special ¥2000 tickets to *Gundam F-91* last December received a sneak preview 30-minute video tape containing the first episode of the new series in a promotional package known as the "G x G Unit."

"Stardust Memory" is written by Yoshiyuki Tomino and Hajime Yadachi. Direction is by Mitsuko Kase, the first woman to ever direct any part of the Gundam legend; Toshihiro Kawamoto is the character designer. Although Shoji Kawamori (*Macross*, *Dangaio*) is credited with the mechanical "styling," Hajime Katori and Mika Mitsuki contribute the mechanical designs for the OAV series.

Characters

Koh Uraki

A 19-year-old private in the Earth Federation, Koh yearns to follow in his father's footsteps and so becomes a mobile suit test pilot at the Earth Federation's Australia base. Koh becomes instrumental in the battle against the Delars Force when they strike his base.

Nina Purpleton

A 21-year-old system engineer from Anaheim Electronics. Nina is in charge of the Gundam's operational systems.

Anavel Gato

An expert pilot, Anavel is a 25-year-old commander (lieutenant) in the Delars Force. He was one of the Zabi family's royal guards during the One-Year War and is placed in charge of stealing the experimental Gundam Test Unit II.

Chuck Keith

A 20-year-old soldier stationed at the Australian test base and one of Koh's closest friends.

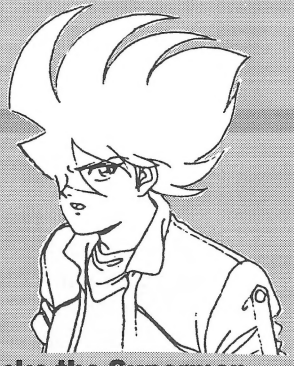
Mini-Updates

Bubble Gum Crush, Vol. 1

Bubble Gum Crisis, Vol. 8 will be the last of the series to be released under the *BGC* title. However, the series will be continued under the new title "Bubble Gum Crush." The title change is due to the change in distributor and production studio from Toshiba EMI to Polydor and from Artmic/AIC to Artland (remember when *Rhea Gall Force* changed to *Gall Force, Earth Chapter One*?). The first 45-minute volume is slated for a May 25, 1991 release.

3x3 Eyes

The popular comic by Yuzo Takada will be released as a four-volume original animation video series from Bandai. *3x3 Eyes* will be an adaptation of the first two volumes of the comic and is scheduled for release every other month beginning June, 1991.



Locke the Superman, "The New World Fighters," Vol. 1

Locke the Superman is returning for another OAV series. This time, Locke joins with four other esper companions all of whom have had their memories stolen by the federation computer "Elena" . . . Bandai is scheduled to release "New World Fighters" in two 50-minute segments beginning April, 1991.

YOTODEN

Part Three: Chapter of Blazing Flames

By Dana Kurtin

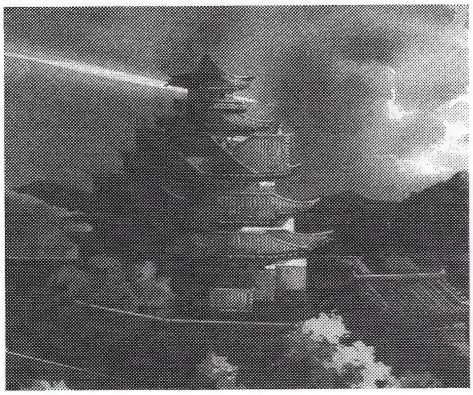
Yotoden, the story of three ninjas bound together by mystical swords and an ancient prophecy, was released as an OAV trilogy beginning in 1988 by C.I.C. Victor. Created and written by Riji Yamazaki, *Yotoden* recreates history using Japan's intricate legacy of shoguns, daimyos and secret ninja tribes. Character designs by Kenichi Onuki (*Dragonar*, *Tokyo Vice*) attempt not only to create memorable characters, but to emulate the costume and style of the late 16th century in Japan, a time when western influences vied with traditional Japanese values as rival lords fought for territory.

One of the most prominent historical characters in *Yotoden* is Nobunaga Oda. According to record, this ambitious and cold-blooded man set his goal as the unification of Japan—under his own rule. Generally regarded by historians as a highly skilled military commander, he was the first to use western technology in warfare, using firearms against more traditional, "honorable" weapons. One of his more notorious acts was the burning-alive of a sect of militant Buddhists. Given Nobunaga's history, it is but a small leap of the imagination to assume, as *Yotoden* creator Yamazaki does, that Nobunaga was driven and possessed by demons.

Ironically, Nobunaga's death was similar to that of the Buddhists he had burned. One of his military officers, Mitsuhide Akechi, set fire to Nobunaga's home in Honnoji Castle. According to different sources, Nobunaga either died in the flames or committed suicide to prevent a horrible, lingering death.

Akechi then tried to gain power for himself. His notorious "three-day reign" ended when he was stabbed to death by angry farmers while escaping a disastrous battle. Hideyoshi Toyotomi, another of Nobunaga's allies, took this opportunity to establish connections between the other feudal lords and began the long path to a unified Japan (see ANIMAG No. 11 for details).

However, in *Yotoden*, the peace Hideyoshi created is a long way away. Nobunaga has joined with demon allies to place all of Japan under his rule. Using his demon soldiers, he crushes all opposition, including peaceful rural ninja clans. The deaths of their families has driven three ninjas to join against Nobunaga with three mystical blades prophesied to drive away evil.



The comet, a harbinger of doom, streaks past Azuchi Castle

Chapter of Burning Flames

As Honnoji Castle seethes with flame, Nobunaga Oda's ally, Mitsuhide Akechi, has turned traitor and burnt Nobunaga's stronghold in an attempt to kill the demon lord. Ayanosuke of the Kasumi clan and Ryoma of the Hagakure clan have spitted Oda for the fire . . . or so they think until they see the dead imposter's face. All of Japan now thinks Nobunaga is dead, which is just what Nobunaga wants.

It is June 10th, in the 10th year of *tensei*. At Amagazaki Castle in Settsu province Nobunaga's son meets with Hideyoshi, his father's ally in battle, and asks if he should attack Akechi for killing his father. Although both he and Hideyoshi know that Nobunaga was possessed they can't let the secret out, and to not take revenge would look suspicious. Hideyoshi, however, has shocking news: Nobunaga is alive and at Azuchi castle.

At Azuchi castle demons tear ravenously at the bodies of the dead. Ranmaru Mori, Nobunaga's demonic valet, tells Nobunaga that now they must await "the time." Nobunaga gloats and eagerly awaits his domination of all Japan.

Near the demon lord's stronghold is Sakon's hermitage, where the priest, Ryoan, tries to convince him to join his friends in battling

Ayanosuke confronts a weary Sakon

Nobunaga contemplates his evil victory

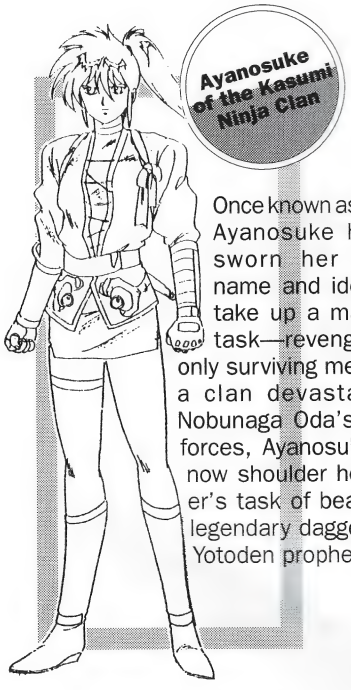
Nobunaga. There are only five days left to stop Nobunaga, and Ayanosuke and Ryoma need his blade to complete the prophecy. Ryoan tells Sakon that the two will attempt to stop Nobunaga on their own but will certainly be defeated. "Can you let them die?" he asks.

Sakon responds only that Ayanosuke and Ryoma are fools fighting for a useless reason, and that he would only slow them down.

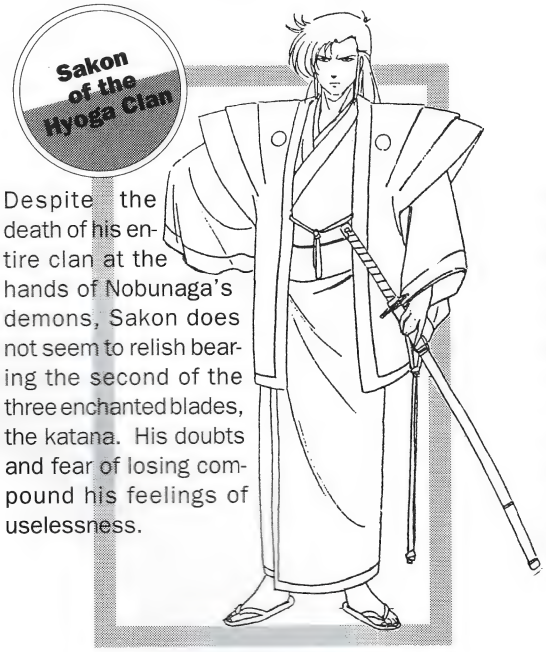
That night at his camp at Harage Toge, in Honnoji, Mitsuhide Akechi notes that Hideyoshi is late and wonders if he and his forces have returned to Amagazaki Castle. He remembers his attempt to sway Hideyoshi to his side.

As the scene fades, it is revealed that Akechi's "reign" as shogun has lasted a mere three days, until he is assassinated by Hideyoshi.

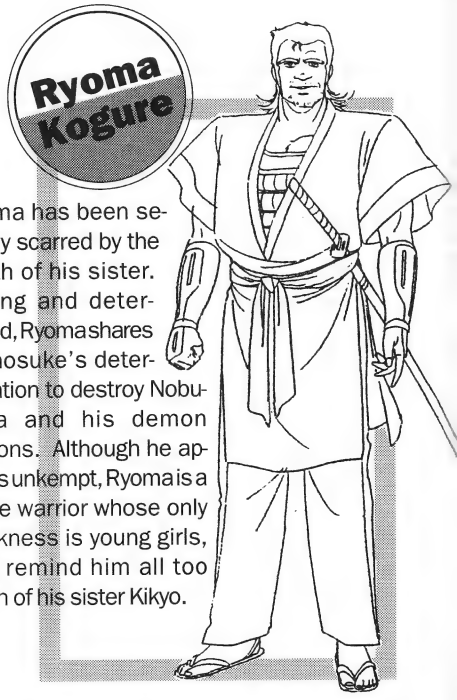
Somewhere near Azuchi castle Ayanosuke and Ryoma contemplate the battle ahead of them. Ayanosuke's mind returns to her attempt to persuade Sakon to rejoin them.



Once known as Ayame, Ayanosuke has forsworn her female name and identity to take up a masculine task—revenge. The only surviving member of a clan devastated by Nobunaga Oda's demon forces, Ayanosuke must now shoulder her brother's task of bearing the legendary dagger of the Yotoden prophecy.



Despite the death of his entire clan at the hands of Nobunaga's demons, Sakon does not seem to relish bearing the second of the three enchanted blades, the katana. His doubts and fear of losing compound his feelings of uselessness.



Ryoma has been severely scarred by the death of his sister. Strong and determined, Ryoma shares Ayanosuke's determination to destroy Nobunaga and his demon minions. Although he appears unkempt, Ryoma is a fierce warrior whose only weakness is young girls, who remind him all too much of his sister Kikyo.

She had tried to convince Sakon that the prophecy was their destiny. Sakon replied contemptuously, "Do you really believe this prophecy nonsense? Can you throw your life away for this 'destiny' . . . Ayame?" His kiss catches her completely by surprise. When she angrily turns to leave, Sakon tells her she should think about what she is fighting for.

Ryoma brings her out of her reverie. Ayanosuke decides that since they can't count on Sakon, they must attack Nobunaga on their own, tonight.

The two launch their attack. Ayanosuke easily overcomes the demons guarding the front of the castle with her "whirlwind" technique and comes face to face with Kiheji, leader of the Oboroshu demons. His flung dagger sends her own blade flying and flips her into a dripping demon net.

Ayanosuke tears herself free and recovers her dagger, but Kiheji still has the advantage when a masked figure intercedes.

"Sakon!" Ayanosuke cries. As he confronts Kiheji, Sakon tells her to keep going toward the castle.

As Ayanosuke dashes forward, Ryoan suddenly appears. "Looks like you made it just in time!" the wizened little man cries.

Meanwhile, Ryoma climbs over the castle's back wall into its broad courtyard. Amid the heaped bodies of fallen soldiers is a beautiful little girl bouncing her ball.

Ryoma approaches her and the corpses leap into sudden life. As Ryoma hacks them away, the girl's ball rolls to his feet and explodes. The girl smiles. Ryoma guts her with his spear and she thrashes into her demon form and dies. Ryoma, cursing his gullibility, loses consciousness.

Masked, Sakon battles the sneering Kiheji

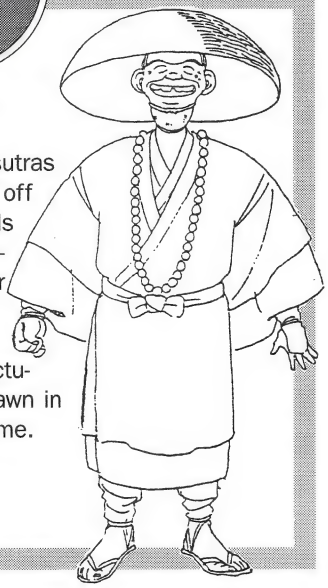
Inside the castle, Nobunaga screams in pain and clutches his head, but Ranmaru Mori refuses to help him. "This is what is supposed to happen, my lord," he says.

Ryoan stops to confront more demons as Ayanosuke begins to climb the exterior of the castle with enormous ninja leaps. Suddenly the ground begins to shake violently and sink into the ground, sending Ayanosuke flying.

"The new master!" the demon Kiheji cries as Nobunaga, in his true hideous form, emerges from the wreckage of Azuchi Castle.

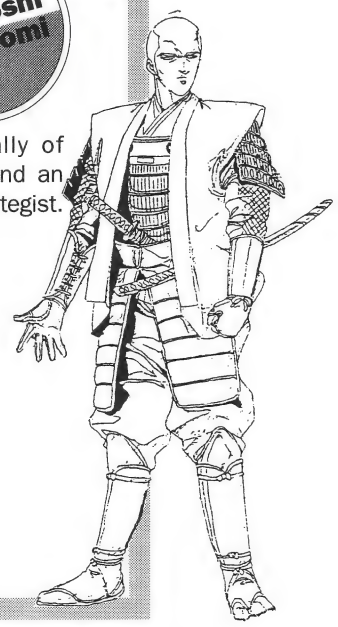
Ranmaru notices Ryoan chanting sutras as protection against the demons. "There's no more use for you," he smirks, tossing him onto a spike. In death, Ryoan's unsuspected demon form is revealed.

Ryoan



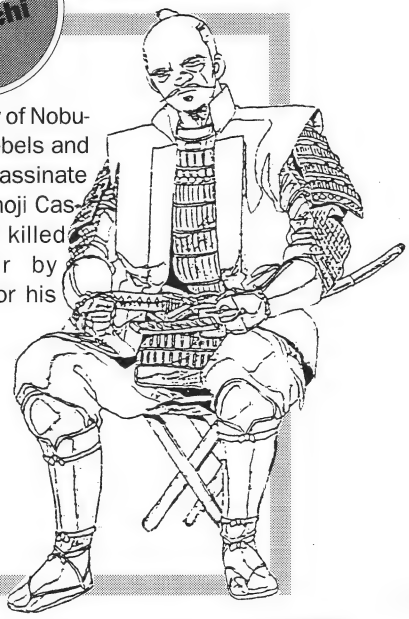
A priest whose sutras appear to ward off demons. He aids the three blade-bearers in their battle against Nobunaga, although he is actually a deadly pawn in Nobunaga's game.

Hideyoshi Toyotomi



A warrior ally of Nobunaga and an excellent strategist.

Mitsuhide Akechi



A former ally of Nobunaga who rebels and tries to assassinate him at Honnoji Castle. He is killed soon after by Hideyoshi for his treachery.

Nobunaga's hideous true form is revealed

Kiheji returns his attention to Sakon, spearing him through the gut. Mortally wounded, Sakon calls Ayanosuke's name as Nobunaga clutches her in his enormous fist.

Ryoma revives at Ayanosuke's scream and blasts Nobunaga with his spear. Nobunaga drops Ayanosuke, who flips and lands safely on a pole. "When the three blades become one," Ayanosuke calls defiantly, "they will destroy evil!"

She leaps onto Nobunaga's head and plunges the dagger between his eyes. The demon lord writhes, the house explodes, Ayanosuke is tossed to the ground—and all is quiet.

Just as Ayanosuke begins to hope they have won, a sinister laugh comes from an unharmed Ranmaru Mori, who floats just above the wreckage of Azuchi Castle.

Ranmaru Mori reveals to Ayanosuke that both Nobunaga and Ryoan were demons, although neither of them were aware of it. Ayanosuke tries to attack him, but Ranmaru tells her that since he created the blades they cannot harm him.

"Humans are so stupid," he mocks, "Didn't you wonder where the blades came from? Did you really think God gave them to you to defeat evil?"

Deflecting another attack, he continues his explanation of the demon doorway opening beneath him. After a billion-year confinement he escaped to this plane and created the blades and the prophecy to bring forth the demon lord. For 300 years he has taken advantage of human

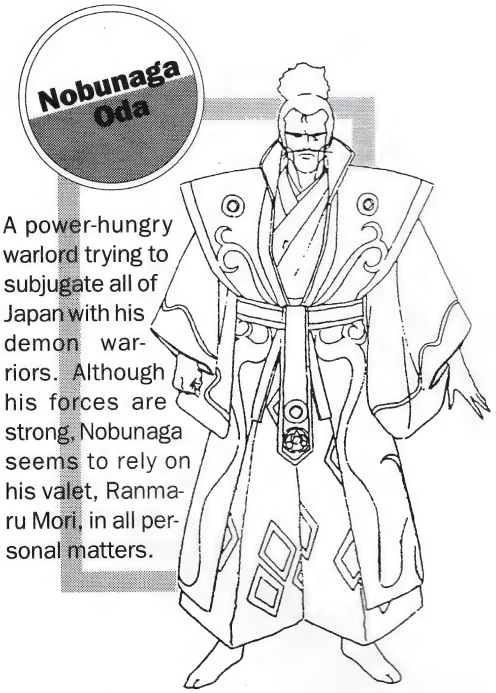
Ranmaru Mori reveals his true power

Ayanosuke risks a dismayed backward glance

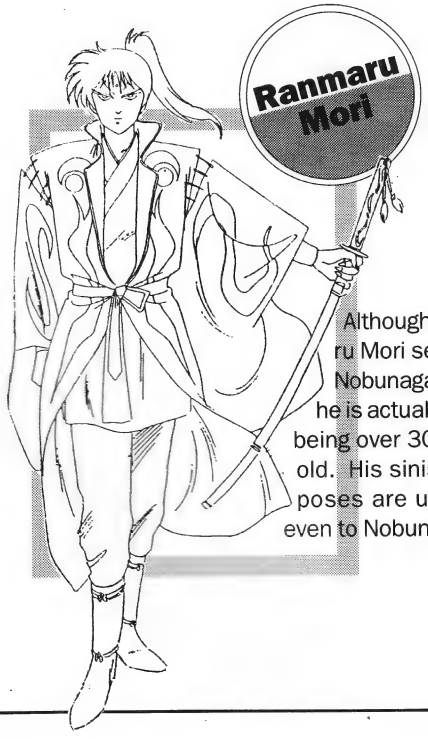
greed, hatred and gullibility. He had Ayanosuke's clan killed to ensure that revenge would force her to bring the blade to Azuchi Castle. The clash of the swords with the demons, combined with the comet splitting the sky, has created a passageway through which the demon lord can emerge.

Ayanosuke launches yet another attack but is effortlessly thwarted. As Ranmaru prepares the final blow Sakon leaps in front of Ayanosuke.

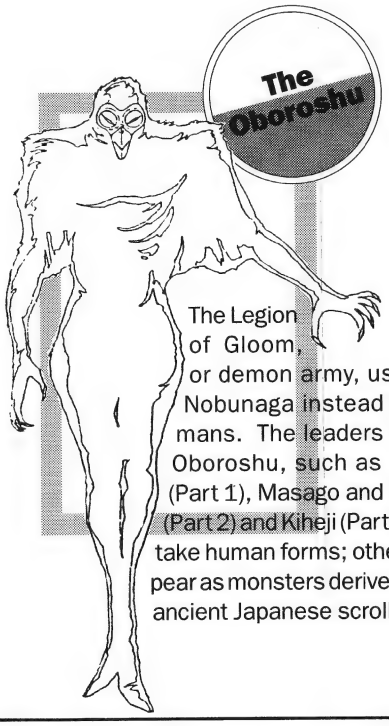
Ranmaru is surprised that another blade-bearer survives. He attacks with more bolts of energy but the two roll to safety. Ayanosuke tries to fight back but Ranmaru is at an obvious advantage. She is at his mercy when



A power-hungry warlord trying to subjugate all of Japan with his demon warriors. Although his forces are strong, Nobunaga seems to rely on his valet, Ranmaru Mori, in all personal matters.



Although Ranmaru Mori serves as Nobunaga's valet, he is actually an evil being over 300 years old. His sinister purposes are unknown even to Nobunaga.



The Legion of Gloom, or demon army, used by Nobunaga instead of humans. The leaders of the Oboroshu, such as Jinnai (Part 1), Masago and Genzo (Part 2) and Kiheji (Part 3) can take human forms; others appear as monsters derived from ancient Japanese scrolls.

Sakon, gagging blood, staggers to defend her. Ranmaru stops to jeer at Sakon's heroic attempt—and is impaled on Ryoma's halberd.

Ryoma calls for Ayanosuke and Sakon to kill both Ranmaru and himself in an attempt to close the opening demon doorway. As he leaps over the glowing chasm, Sakon and Ayanosuke direct the mystical power of their blades at the two bodies. Ryoma dies screaming his sister's name.

The energy around the doorway grows until it encompasses the entire castle, fades, and explodes. The demon doorway is gone; only rubble remains.

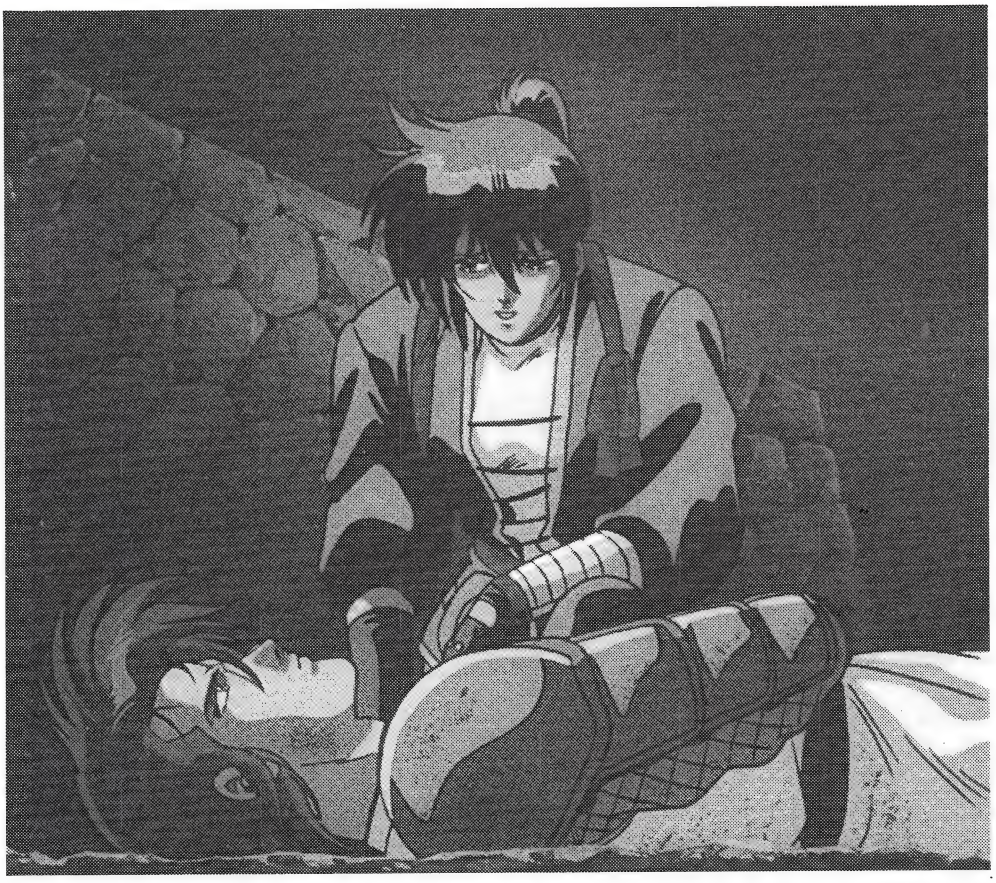
Ayanosuke turns to the fallen Sakon. He tells her that now she can become a woman again, but Ayanosuke tells him to save his lectures for later.

"I would have liked to talk to you, man to woman, " Sakon says. "Look at the moon."

When Ayanosuke looks down again, Sakon is dead. Ayanosuke weeps, not only for Sakon, but for all that she has lost to the 300-year-old lie of the prophecy.

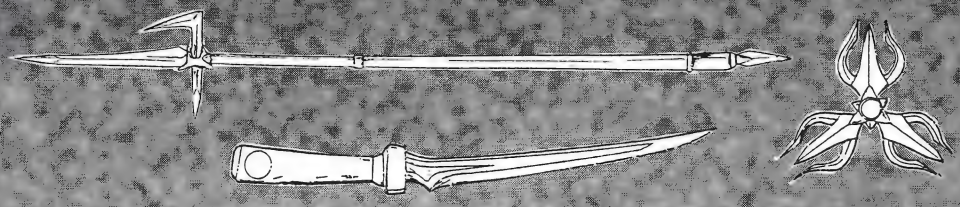
Hideyoshi arrives at Azuchi with Nobunaga's son and set it aflame to hide all evidence of what has occurred. Modern history does not know why Azuchi castle burned, but this event foretold the end of the feudal era and began a new age of peaceful unity under Hideyoshi Toyotomi.

400 years later, Azuchi mountain tells no tales. ■



"I would have liked to talk to you, man to woman, Ayame..."

Ninjitsu



Ninjitsu is one of the most mysterious, and most misunderstood, of the martial arts. Like kung fu and jujitsu, ninjitsu has a long, convoluted history and is therefore a mixture of various techniques, practices and philosophies.

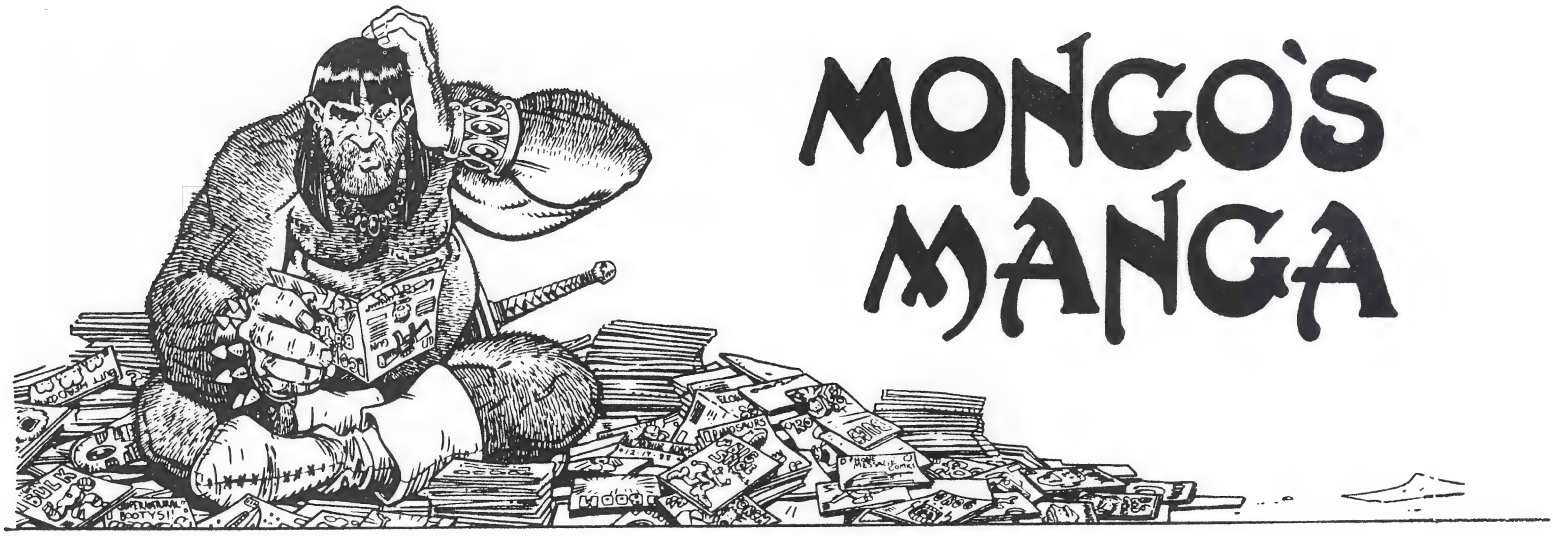
Historically, whole clans of ninja worked large agricultural villages in various prefectures throughout Japan. In many cases, local daimyos (feudal lords) employed these clans as regular forces of assassins, bodyguards, spies, etc. Many such powerful agrarian clans, as seen in *Yotoden*, lived in the Iga and Koga sections of Japan and fell under attack by Nobunaga Oda in the late 16th century.

Ninjitsu requires a strict regimen of training in both armed and unarmed combat and emphasizes self-preservation over the more traditional code of self-sacrifice as practiced by samurai. Ninja train with as many different weapons as possible in anticipation of a time when their short *wakizashi*-style sword is not at hand.

Wounds inflicted by a ninja are usually more serious than they appear. Except for assassinations, ninja do not seek to kill but to use wounds as a distraction for escape. Most ninja blows involve hand, wrist and joint locks coupled with crippling blows, but these strikes are usually limited to when the subject is to be permanently maimed or killed.

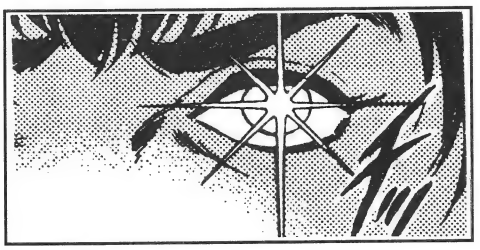
The most important aspect of a ninja's mission, however, is to protect the secrecy of their missions, by death if necessary. As Sakon says in the third part of *Yotoden*, "A ninja never gives up until he's dead."

—Eric Hedman



MONGO'S MANGA

Gokuu Midnight Eye



Gokuu Midnight Eye is a recent comic by Terasawa Buichi, whose career started with *Space Adventure Cobra* for the Japanese periodical *Comic Burger*. Both series have common elements: a handsome hero, with a mysterious weapon of great power, bizarre enemies, graphic violence, and beautiful women, who are dressed revealingly, if at all. Terasawa's women are arguably the most prominent feature of his works, and *Gokuu* is no exception.

Terasawa's stories and art seem to have matured since *Cobra*; the excess of gratuitous sex, while still present, is toned down. Some might even say that *Gokuu* has a certain sophistication missing in *Cobra*.

In *Gokuu*, Terasawa shows us the world of tomorrow as a reflection of today and demonstrates through the main character that heroes live by their own set of values. There is a philosophical layer underlaying the energetic, sexy, high-tech adventure, and this is only one of *Gokuu*'s many appealing facets.

Story

In 1923, one-third of Tokyo is destroyed in the Great (an estimated 8.3 on the Richter scale) Kanto Earthquake. In 1999, a second Great Earthquake levels Tokyo entirely. The story of *Gokuu Midnight Eye* begins fifteen years later, in the newly rebuilt, futuristic Tokyo metropolis of 2014.

Fuurinji Gokuu was Tokyo Megalopolitan Police's top detective until two years ago, when he resigned because he wasn't making enough money. He subsequently became a high-priced private investigator, charging ¥20,000 per day after taxes, plus expenses.

When Tamiya, a detective and friend of Gokuu's from his days on the force, commits suicide in a crowded nightclub, Gokuu wants to know what happened—especially since Tamiya was the fourth detective to apparently "suicide" in the last six months. The police warn Gokuu to stay out of their business or he'll get in trouble. But Gokuu is determined to learn the truth.

Knowing that all the dead officers were members of the police's Special Investigations Unit, Gokuu enlists the aid of Yabuki Yoko, the Unit's sole female member.

Yoko tells him that the Unit was formed a year ago to investigate Hakuryuu Genji, an international arms merchant. The investigation is necessary because Hakuryuu appears merely to be the owner of the building bearing his name and the club and casino located therein. Therefore, the police need evidence of Hakuryuu's arms deals before they can arrest him (additional caution is in order due to Hakuryuu's many powerful friends). Gokuu makes the conclusion that Hakuryuu may be connected to the detectives' mysterious deaths.

Gokuu and Yoko arrive at Yoko's assignment, an observation post across from the Hakuryuu Building, just in time to see the two officers on duty plunging to the sidewalk, leaving Yoko the official last member of the Special Investigations Unit.

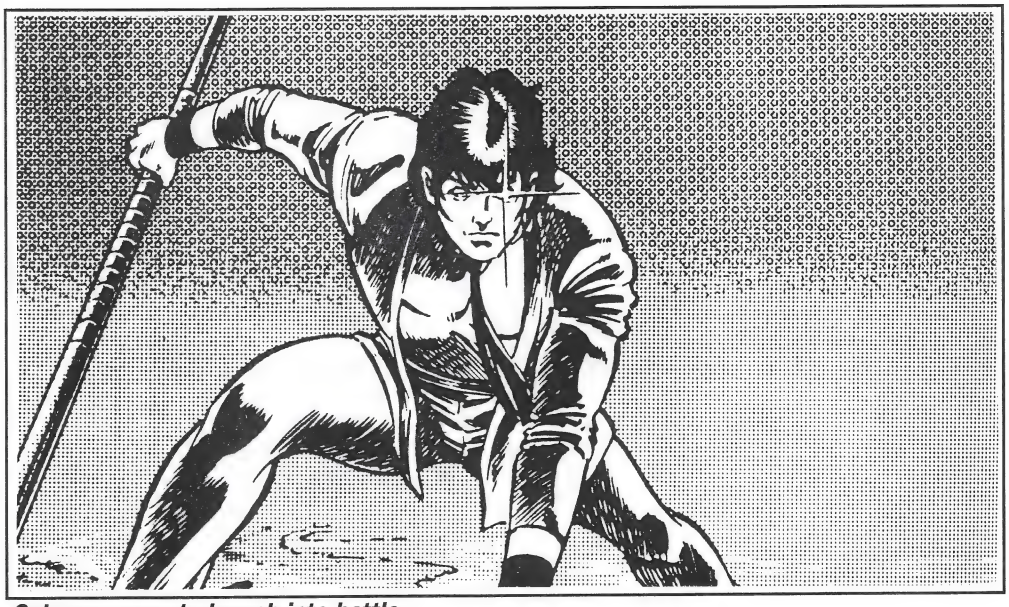
Gokuu breaks into the Hakuryuu Building through its underground fuel tanks despite Yoko's protests. He gets as far as the nightclub where he is caught by two of Hakuryuu's android watchdogs.

To protect his own interests, Hakuryuu decides that it would be best if Gokuu were to "accidentally" die elsewhere. Under Hakuryuu's orders, Gokuu is stung by a mosquito whose venom has been replaced with an anesthetic. Gokuu comes to in his car, driving over Tokyo Bay.

A beautiful, naked woman appears and hypnotizes him with the eyes of the peacock feathers extending out of her back. To stop himself from being fatally hypnotized, he stabs out his own left eye. Gokuu drives off the bridge into the bay, seemingly to his death.

A bodiless voice calls to him and tells Gokuu that his left eye has been replaced with a miniature computer terminal and sensor array. This device will allow him to access any information available through a computer, and since the entire world is now tied into the computer net, Gokuu effectively now holds the world in his hands.

It seems that the only thing the eye cannot tell him is the identity of the person (or organi-



Goku prepares to launch into battle

zation) who gave it to him and why. When he asks, the mysterious voice merely tells him that he will soon learn the answers to those questions. Gokuu is also given a metallic quarterstaff and is told that his eye will know how to use it. "You will find it useful," the voice says.

Gokuu awakens on a park bench in the rain with a newspaper over his head. A map appears in his left eye in response to his reflexive thought as to immediate location, convincing Gokuu that he is not dreaming.

After using the eye and the quarterstaff to deal with a pair of would-be muggers, Gokuu goes to save Yoko from becoming Hakuryuu's next victim. However, he arrives too late to prevent Yoko's being stung by lethal versions of the mosquito that was made to sting Gokuu previously. Gokuu kills the Peacock and Chang, Hakuryuu's muscle-bound android, and transports Yoko to a local hospital.

Goku beheads an almost unstoppable foe

When Yoko dies, Gokuu once again ignores the law and takes justice into his own hands. While Hakuryuu makes back-to-back deals with both sides of an armed conflict, Gokuu breaks into his building again and is fired upon and nearly drowned by the building's automated defense systems. Finally, Gokuu kills Hakuryuu by turning his own mechanisms against him, just as Hakuryuu clinches yet another arms deal.

In succeeding stories, Gokuu meets with such foes as a cyborg clone with a built-in forcefield projector, a malevolent psychic force in an AI (artificial intelligence), a drug dealer, a biker gang, the singer who's mixed up with both of them, and an assassin with an interchangeable right arm who's out to kill Gokuu's cyclist ex-girlfriend. Two collected books, containing a total of five stories, were released within a month of each other in 1988, and sold out six printings in less than nine months. By April, 1990, the combined print run of both volumes exceeded 1,000,000 copies. A third volume in the series was released in January, 1991, two and one-half years after the release of the second volume. The laser disc of the second *Gokuu* OAV was released at almost half the price of the first as a token of thanks to the fans (not to mention a shrewd marketing maneuver).

As of this time, there have been no plans announced for a third OAV. However, as both the manga and OAV formats have proven so popular with fans, further episodes in the *Gokuu* series seem to be only a matter of time. ■

—Michael House

About the Monkey King

Terasawa draws some interesting parallels between his titular character and his mythical namesake, Sun Gokuu (or Sung Uu Kong, in Chinese).

Sun Gokuu is known in Chinese literature as both the Monkey King and the Sky Bandit. He possesses a quarterstaff that can extend to any length on command, and it's been suggested that this "quarterstaff" was actually a pillar from the palace of Buddha. Accordingly, only Gokuu was strong enough to wield it.

In Terasawa's manga version, Gokuu's quarterstaff telescopes to ridiculous lengths without appreciable change in thickness or rigidity. While Sun Gokuu travels on a cloud (which also responds to his will), Terasawa's Gokuu possesses a white Corvette that might be thought to symbolize that cloud.

According to the legend, Sun Gokuu meets a Buddhist priest named Genjo who places a metal band around his head. If Sun Gokuu does something Genjo doesn't like, Genjo can make the band constrict by speaking a chant. In this way, Genjo convinces the Monkey King to help him search for Nirvana.

As they search, they gather other companions in the form of earth, fire, and water elementals (Sun Gokuu as Sky Bandit was already filling the role of air elemental). Together they seek out and destroy evil, spreading word of Nirvana, until finally they discover that while seeking Nirvana they have in fact created it.

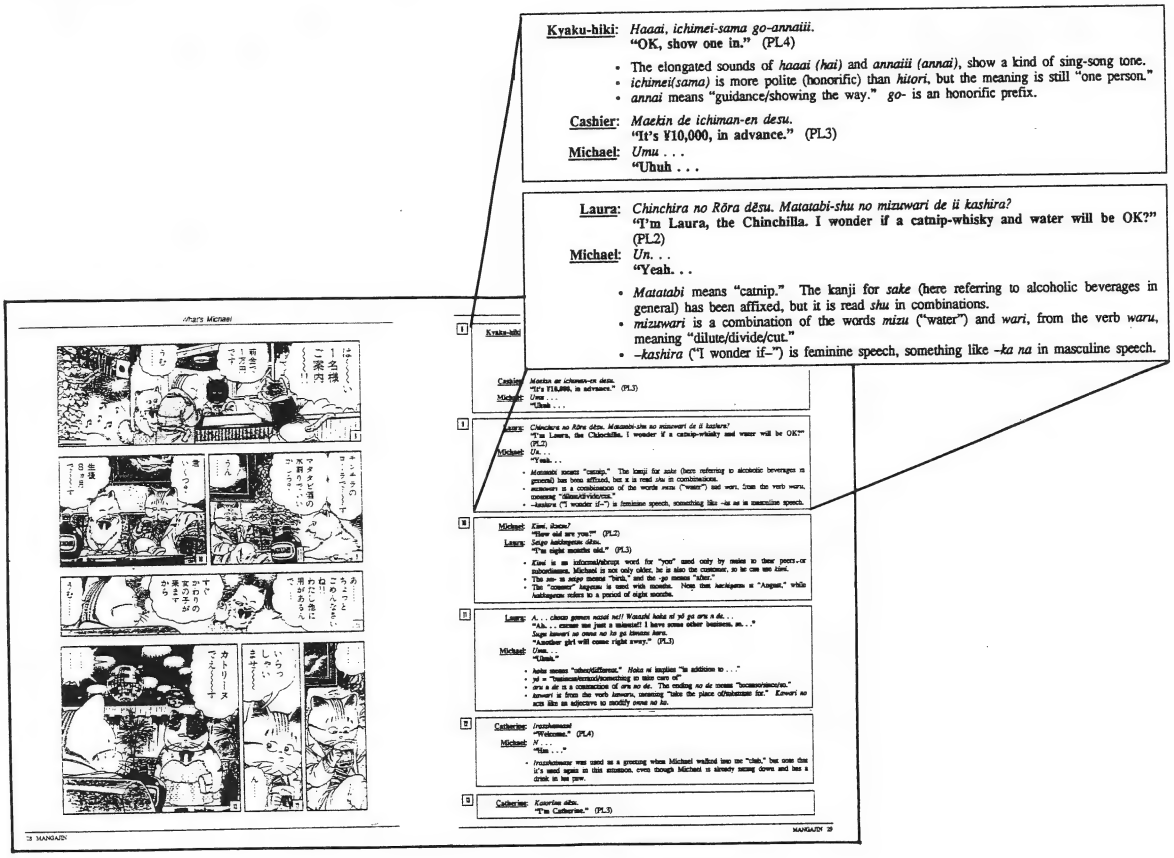
In Terasawa's manga, Gokuu assumes that whoever gave him the high-tech eye and staff gadgets expects him to do something with them. Unfortunately, his benefactor hasn't been too clear on what he wants Gokuu to do with them. Gokuu decides to use them to right wrongs as he sees fit, which may be what his benefactor wants, after all.

銀河鉄道999

GALAXY EXPRESS 999

by Matsumoto Reiji

Presented in the unique Mangajin format —
manga in the original Japanese, English translation and notes on the facing page



Kyaku-hiki: *Haaai, ichimei-sama go-annaiii.*
"OK, show one in." (PL4)

- The elongated sounds of *haaai (hai)* and *annaiii (annai)*, show a kind of sing-song tone.
- *ichimei(sama)* is more polite (honorific) than *hitori*, but the meaning is still "one person."
- *annai* means "guidance/showing the way." *go-* is an honorific prefix.

Cashier: *Maekin de ichiman-en desu.*
"It's ¥10,000, in advance." (PL3)

Michael: *Umu . . .*
"Uhuh . . .

Laura: *Chinchira no Rōra dēsu. Matatabi-shu no mizuwari de ii kashira?*
"I'm Laura, the Chinchilla. I wonder if a catnip-whisky and water will be OK?" (PL2)

Michael: *Un. . .*
"Yeah. . .

- *Matatabi* means "catnip." The kanji for *sake* (here referring to alcoholic beverages in general) has been affixed, but it is read *shu* in combinations.
- *mizuwari* is a combination of the words *mizu* ("water") and *wari*, from the verb *waru*, meaning "dilute/divide/cut."
- *–kashira* ("I wonder if–") is feminine speech, something like *–ka na* in masculine speech.

In Vol.1, No.6 of ...

漫画人
MANGAJIN

Mangajin is available through comic book stores and select newsstands.

Retailers, Mangajin is distributed by:

• Capital City • Diamond Comic • Ingram • 48 States • Andromeda • Books Nippan

ANIME COMPACT DISC & LASERDISC

CALL NOW!
1-415-753-2016

LASER PERCEPTIONS

MON-SAT 11AM TO 9PM
SUNDAYS 11AM TO 7PM

CALL OR WRITE
FOR OUR CATELOG

3300 JUDAH ST · SAN FRANCISCO · CALIFORNIA 94122 · FAX 1-415-564-3821

Five Star Stories

Book Two

Clotho the Sleeping Witch, Part Two

The Third and Final Installment of Mamoru Nagano's Blockbuster Manga Epic

By James Christiansen

The Five Star Stories began in 1986 in the pages of the Japanese animation periodical *Newtype*, and with the exception of one short sabbatical, *Five Star* has run in monthly installments ever since.

This installment covers the second half of Book Two, "Clotho the Sleeping Witch." Although it has yet to be released in a compiled version, it is expected to be released soon. For readers who have not read "Clotho" in *Newtype*, a few notes.

Those of you with sharp eyes may notice changes in the story made for the sake of continuity or the updating of new information. As Nagano has been known to say, "The latest version is the correct version."

Also, kings, knights and other nobles are referred to by their proper titles—no Falk U. Rogner, only King Falk—and female fatimas are referred to as " lady. "

The Story Thus Far

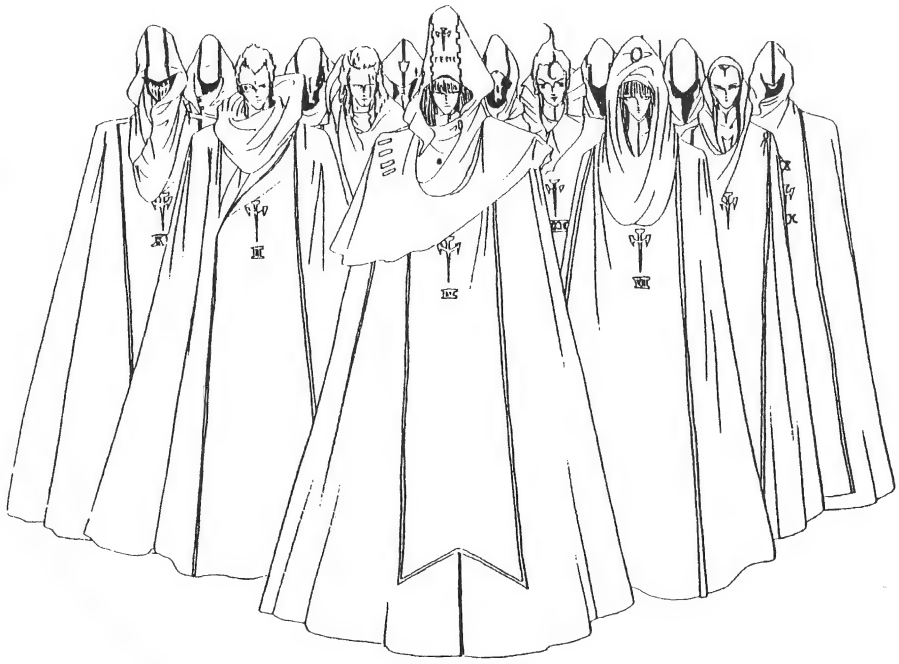
In the stellar calendar year (S.C.) 2989, the United Kingdoms of Hagooda (Juno) declared war on the Trio de Colus Dynasty (Juno). The war was expected to be a short one, for no nation seriously believed that this four-hundred-year-old upstart could prevail against the ancient power of the Colus Dynasty . . . no one, that is, except for Hagooda's powerful and merciless allies: Imperial Philmore (Kalamity), the United Republic of Hashua (Both) and Colballkan Sutra (Kalamity).

With the backing of these nations, the puppet-state of Hagooda conquered and held almost one-third of the Colus nation in a single attack in the Colus province of Atoki. Hagooda's key to victory and ace in the hole were the sadistic Boowrey Mercenary Knight Corps, a covert terrorist squad collectively backed by Hagooda's allies. In addition to securing Hagooda's victory at Atoki, the

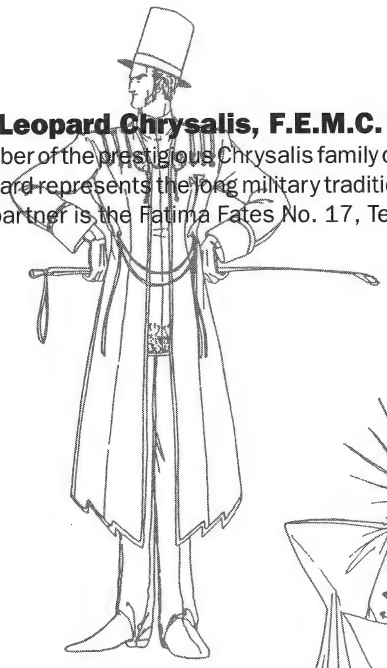
The Mirage Knights

Amaterasu's personal guard, officially known as the First Easter Mirage Corps Knights or F.E.M.C. The Mirage Knights are considered first-class headdliners and pilot the the Led, Rouge, Cross, Terror and Jagt Mirage mortar headds.

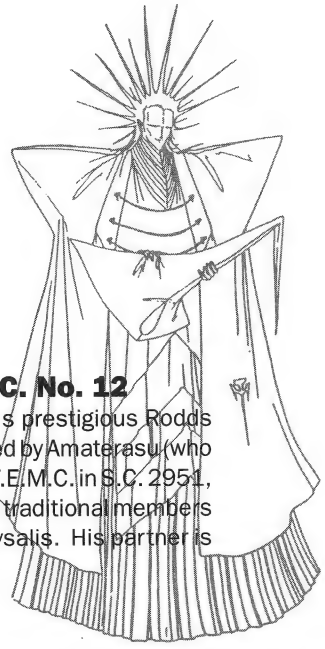
Each knight plays a different role within the Mirage Corps. They could be kings, *kagemusha* (royal imposters), babysitters, spies, secret agents or assassins: a Mirage Knight is all of these people and more. They are spread throughout the Joker Systems and command the army of the Amaterasu Kingdom Demesne (A.K.D.). Each knight takes an oath of loyalty to serve only Amaterasu. Currently, King F. U. Rogner governs the Mirage Corps.



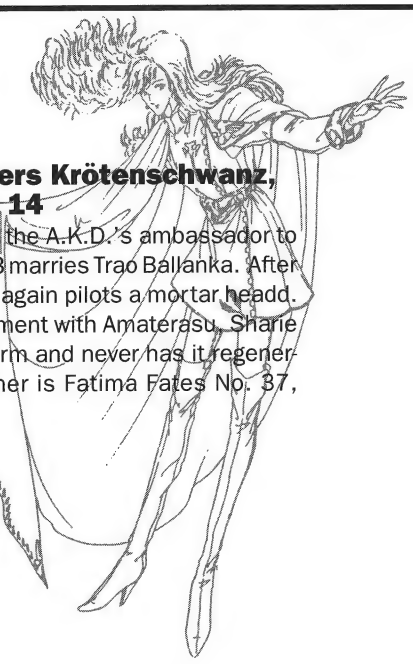
NEW CHARACTERS



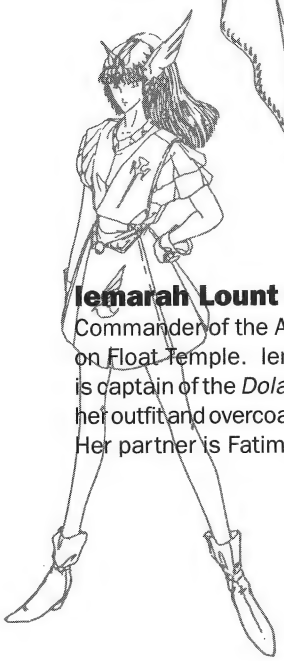
Sir Leopard Chrysalis, F.E.M.C. No. 11
Member of the prestigious Chrysalis family of Delta Belune. Leopard represents the long military tradition of the A.K.D. His partner is the Fatima Fates No. 17, Teata.



Urazan Sie, F.E.M.C. No. 12
Previously one of Addler's prestigious Rodds Knights, Urazan was asked by Amaterasu (who liked his style) to join the F.E.M.C. in S.C. 2951, much to the bane of more traditional members such as Sir Leopard Chrysalis. His partner is the Morard fatima Pillet.



Sharie Landers Krötenschwanz, F.E.M.C. No. 14
Sharie becomes the A.K.D.'s ambassador to Juno and in 2993 marries Trao Ballanka. After 2991 she never again pilots a mortar headd. Due to an agreement with Amaterasu, Sharie loses her right arm and never has it regenerated. Her partner is Fatima Fates No. 37, Aphrochune.



Iemarah Lount Jajas, F.E.M.C. No. 18
Commander of the A.K.D.'s space fleet, seldom seen on Float Temple. Iemarah is from the planet Atia and is captain of the *Dola* and the *Bell Karlle*. (This is where her outfit and overcoat worn in command originate from.) Her partner is Fatima Fates Solitaire.

Boowrey succeeded in wounding King Colus III and in killing his lover, the fatima Uricul. Several months after the wounding of King Colus III the story resumes.

The Story

A limobus speeds across the countryside of the Colus Kingdom carrying the mortar headd meight Sir Ladios Sopp to a rendezvous with King Colus III. Along the way, Sopp is surprised by his old friend, Voards Viewlard, who extends a rather passionate greeting. Voards introduces Sopp to his travelling companions, Robile Lace of Tran's S.P.I. and his fatima, Melca.

It is soon revealed that Melca's true identity is the fatima Megaera and Voard's true identity is President Mission Rouath of Tran. The bus driver puts the four off the limobus, stranding them in the countryside, 50 km from their destination.

Voards tries unsuccessfully to persuade Sopp and Megaera to take off their clothes to better convince a passing car to stop.

"Hello, *bonjour*, a ride to Jarth, please?" Sopp simpers. The ride turns out to be two knights of the Trio Temple sent to meet the party at the airport.

King Colus III receives the foursome apologizing for his recent bout with the Boowrey. He introduces them to Lady Lizart of Meistner, the new Colus chief of staff. After Lizart shows the Boowrey footage taken by the mortar headd Junchoon, Voards notes that it is similar to a mortar headd he saw on Pestaco, a planet in the Northe System. Lizart excuses herself and leaves the party.

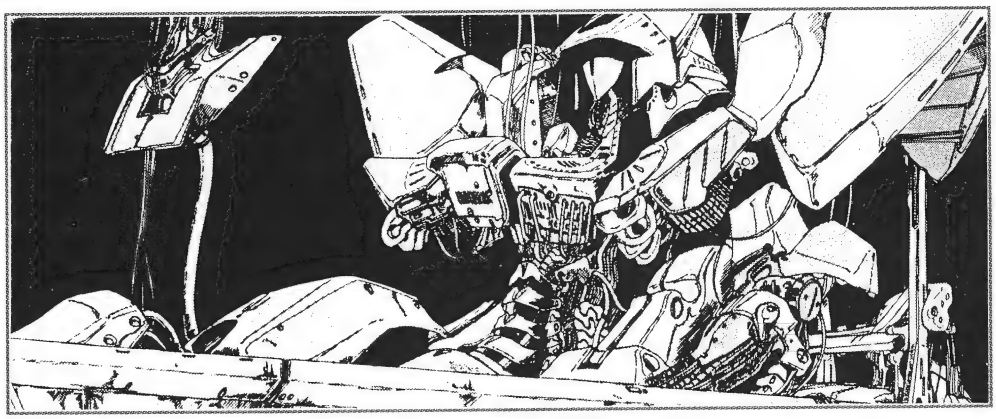
Colus III wonders aloud why he is being attacked; the Colus Kingdom has not attacked a neighbor for over two thousand years.

"Greed and power are not the only causes of war," interrupts Sopp. Ever the humanist, Sopp argues with the cynical Voards that "mankind must learn to live with nature as he would with family or other nations."

Back on Delta Belune in Float Temple, Lachesis patiently awaits the return of her master. She is visited by the masked Mirage Knight, Sir Hind Kill, who requests that she travel to Juno with her three assigned Mirage Knight escorts.

Lachesis asks why everyone is being so kind to her; after all, she's only a fatima. Hind explains that it's not because she's Amaterasu's fatima but rather that Lachesis is the one chosen by Amaterasu. Turning a cold gaze upon her he adds, "The day you entered the castle, the Mirage Knights became your servants."

The Black Knight and company arrive the next day at the Colus palace at Jarth. They are warmly received; Sir Roados Dragoon, Lady Est and Dr. Morard Carbyte are favorites with the people, knights and citizens alike.



Junchoon under repair after the battle against the Boowrey

Later, in the apartments of Colus III, Morard comments that the King seems to be doing much better. Colus III begins to apologize for Uricul's death but is stopped short by Morard, who thanks him for "giving [Uricul] a dream."

His real reason for coming to Juno, Morard confesses, was to meet Clotho. Colus III asks Morard if he has any idea who or what Clotho's sister Lachesis is. "I can't describe it, but at the *ohirome* [initiation ceremony] I felt true terror."

In the pale light of the Colus mortar headd factory Sopp and Colus III examine the Junchoon. While discussing power supplies Colus enlists Sopp's help in completing the yet-unfinished Junchoon.

Back in town, two Trio Knights confront three unknown "professional" knights while Lachesis orders a dessert. Sir Leopard Chrysalis, Sir Sharie Landers Krötenschwanz and Sir Urazan Sie have come pay their respects to King Colus III and apologize for their rudeness, offering to take the Mirage Knights to the palace. Lachesis is not invited along.

During the ride Leopard berates Urazan for his poor choice of attire. Coming from a long line of traditional military men, it's hard for Leopard to accept the gangster-like Urazan or other knights like him as equals. Even after mentioning that King Colus III is not too concerned with matters of formality, the diplomatic Trio Knights fail to quell the growing chaos within the limodigg.

Urazan and Lachesis catch up with Sopp later in the Colus mortar headd factory. Overjoyed at seeing her master once again, Lachesis hangs on to Sopp's arm.

Urazan reports that King Falk and Dr. Dippa Dorops have entered Hagooda and are conducting tests on the A.K.D's newest mortar headd, the Calvary "C" (or Cross Mirage). Leopard has gone to see Colus III and Sharie is on personal business.

Sopp asks Urazan to transport three of the new Led Mirages and the incomplete hull for the Led Mirage No. 0037 to Juno.

Prince Trao Ballanka finds himself talking at the grave of his good friend, Poulurs Landers. He turns to find himself being watched by a beautiful woman who introduces herself as Sir Sharie Landers, Poulurs' sister, adding that she and her brother were separated by their father when they were children. Sharie was sent to the A.K.D. and Poulurs to the Trio.

Colus III remarks that Jarth is starting to look more like an exhibit of mortar headds than a palace. Watching from a distance, Lord Lowpus comments to Lady Lizart that the build-up was inevitable if the A.K.D. and Tran were to maintain their interests on Juno. Lizart hints at information from a "very high source" as Colus III enters the room and acknowledges his debt to the A.K.D.

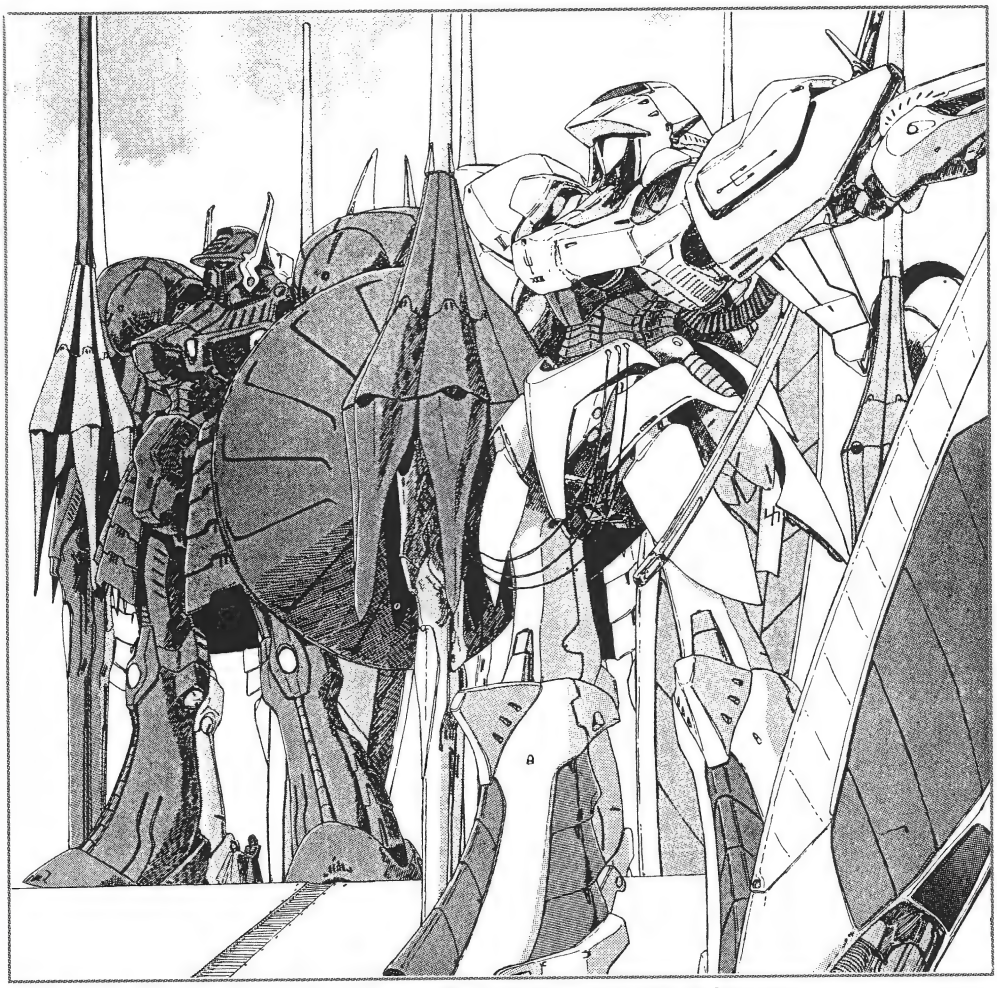
Within the mortar headd factory, Sopp toils away on Junchoon. The new ezlaser engine will be placed into Junchoon's leg with 65% of the Junchoon's original parts used. Additionally, 20% of the new parts and the memory armor from the Led Mirage will also be employed in the final design. In order to balance the enormous power drain most of the sub-systems will be relocated to the veil (shield).

In another part of the palace, Est and Teata get acquainted. Their meeting doesn't escape the notice of Leopard or Roados. Both men of tradition, they too have become friends.

The three Mirage Knights and Sirs Chrysalis, Krötenschwanz and Sie wait for Lachesis on Juno

The *Dola*, commanded by Iemarah, arrives at Castle Colus bringing the requested Led Mirages, Voards' Branji, Robile Lace's Chroma, fatimas Aphrochune, Pillet, Teata and Sourit and a surprise . . . the Knight of Gold.

Watching from a window, Clotho hears the voices of a future battle when Est and Teata will be on opposing sides and screams at them to stop.



The Black Knight, Junchoon and the Berlins stand ready for the big battle

In a palace garden, Morard at long last meets Lachesis. Before he can introduce himself a curious thing happens—instead of a young, brown-haired girl, Morard finds himself face-to-face with a mature, marine-haired woman.

"Hello Dr. Morard, I am Lachesis. Who were you looking for?" She explains that she's not really there but merely settled during her journey through time like a seed carried by the wind. Lachesis prophesies the events to come in the history of the Joker Systems and asks Morard not to blame those responsible: her father, her husband, her daughter, and the Cross of Blood. Tearfully she asks him not to blame her either and bids farewell to "Mr." Morard.

"Ballanche," he says to himself, stunned, "do you realize what you have created?"

That evening Sopp collapses onto his bed, exhausted from hard work. Lachesis pouts in the corner wanting him to play with her. He promises to do so as soon as Junchoon is completed.

"You wouldn't lie to me, would you?" Lachesis asks to an already-sleeping Sopp. Lachesis gets up, pulls the covers up over him and adds, "Don't blame me."

The next day, Junchoon's ezlaser engine produces only loud noises. Sopp is perplexed. Colus III wonders if Junchoon is rejecting the new engine while in the background, Lachesis leaves quietly to visit her sister.

Clotho is overjoyed to see her sister once again and throws herself into Lachesis's arms.

"Lachesis, I'm scared!"

"Speak up, what's the matter?" soothes the calm voice and eyes of the marine-haired girl.

"King Colus, he's going to die," sobs Clotho, confessing that she loves him.

"All we can do is accept our fate," Lachesis says calmly. "We cannot change it. Everything is a flame that disappears into the light of history. Within that we run, sing, dance, and cry . . . have no regrets." Lachesis advises Clotho to tell her feelings to Colus and asks her to go to the Junchoon to comfort Colus.

Still perplexed, Sopp and Colus III are about to give up when Clotho enters the factory and goes straight to the Junchoon.

"Rest assured, I'll be with you always. Activate your engines for the great king." Suddenly the ezlaser limiters fall into place and the Junchoon awakens.

With all of the pieces and players on the board, the war begins in earnest for the people of Colus.

†

King Colus III rallies the Colus nation, calling for its help to drive Hagooda from Atork. Later, while the mortar headds are being armed, Sopp cautions Colus III that while the Junchoon can move, it should not be taken into combat prematurely. Colus III thanks him and asks a favor.

Colus III knows that this will be his last time in a mortar headd and, after Uricul's death, he has no intention of taking another fatima. He asks Sopp to watch over Clotho and the Junchoon for future generations of Colus kings.

Colus agrees to allow Clotho to ride with him in the Junchoon. Lachesis asks Colus III to watch over her sister.

"Girl with the marine-blue hair, you have nothing to fear," he says. "Everything will be tied to the threads of destiny." Lachesis concurs and Colus realizes he is no longer afraid of her.

"My older sister is all of our fortunes," Clotho tells her master.

Colus III turns as the people cheer the A.K.D.'s greatest weapon, the Led Mirage. Sopp, meanwhile, can't help but wonder—if Lachesis' hair is chestnut, why did Colus III say marine-blue?

In Atork, Colus mortar headd forces impatiently await news of a Hagooda attack. Behind the king's forces, the three Led Mirages

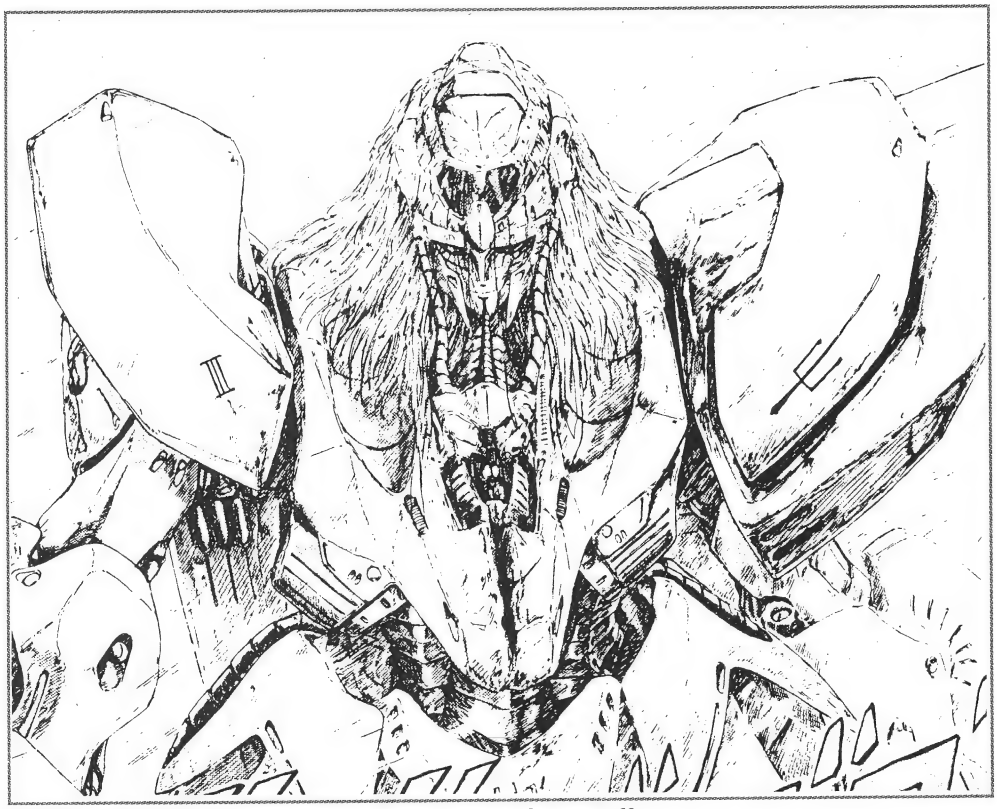
Lachesis greets Dr. Carbyte in her true form

and the Branji wait as well. Back at the king's party, the Mimiba tribesmen spy unnoticed.

At her palace in Dondo, Queen Alamemaios of Hagooda rants and raves over the ill timing of her allies. Where is Corett when she needs him the most? Almost on cue King

Corett appears and promises to send his A'p Temple Knights if Vralgo Kentauri succeeds in completing his part of the operation.

Sopp is preparing to depart Juno with Lachesis and Iemarah when he notices Clotho's shoes on the ground, also noticing that the sword Colus III gave him earlier was a Colus family heirloom. Colus, Sopp thinks, is still carrying Uricul's sword. As if finally putting



Junchoon's real face is seen as its facial armor is torn off

something together, Sopp says, "I thought something was wrong. Iemarah, ready the Knight of Gold!"

Back in Atork the battle has begun. Colus forces suffer heavy losses. Roados worries about Colus III's proximity to the battle yet marvels at his calmness under fire. "Be careful boy, don't scare us old folks," Roados says. Colus III laughs, assuring Roados that he has no intention of fighting. He is only searching for the Boowrey.

He finds them sooner than expected as Vralgo and the Boowrey teleport in from the sky. It seems the Boowrey have used their servants, the Mimiba, to sneak behind the Colus lines and locate the king's exact coordinates for the ambush.

"Know the fact that you pointed a sword at my pride—at my face!" Vralgo screams as his still-airborne Siren's sword strikes home, shattering Junchoon's head armor.

Roados rushes to Colus III's aid but is cut off by two Boowreys.

With the Black Knight occupied and their King absent, the Colus forces look to President Rouath for leadership. Mission orders the Colus forces to regroup.

Sopp, Lachesis and the Knight of Gold emerge from teleport. Sopp is almost done for when an earlier lack of maintenance prevents the Knight of Gold from moving out of the way of an attacking Maglow. Luckily, a second teleport brings Dr. Dorops and her Cross Mirage with its deadly lutar veil to the rescue. A 3-D scope used for calculating teleports is launched and the cavalry soon arrives on the scene.

Inside Junchoon Clotho hears a voice asking for help. Thinking that it's King Colus she admits that she finally knows why she hates mortar headds . . . it's the special programing of her father.

"I was given the power to stop Amaterasu and Lachesis," she sobs. "My hands are scissors made to cut the threads of hope."

"I am not a doll! I don't want the power. I want to live a little longer . . . I want to love the man I love."

Outside, Sopp and Voards realize that there is nothing they can do. Vralgo taunts them and gloats to the Junchoon, "You are the only witness to the end of Colus!"

Once again the voice asks for help. "*Clotho, lend me your strength. For Colus III who made me and for Uricul who lost her life protecting me, I want retribution!*" Clotho realizes at last that the voice is the Junchoon, not Colus, asking for help.

"Just like me," she whispers. "The robot."

"It's over," screams Vralgo, stopped short by the hand of Junchoon.

"Just once," Clotho continues, giving herself to the Junchoon, "I will dream a nightmare. Junchoon, protect Colus III." Junchoon tears off the Siren's arm, sword and all. Rising to its feet its elegantly sculptured face is now visible.

Sensing his brother's plight the Knight of Gold moves of its own accord and tosses the unarmed Junchoon one of his swords. Now united with Clotho, the Junchoon is the most powerful mortar headd in the Five Star System and makes quick work of both Bruno Canzian's Boowrey and Vralgo's Siren.

Roados, Voards and the Mirage Knights in turn dispatch the remaining Boowreys. "Our king is alive! *Vive la Colus*!" scream the knights of Colus as they rush forward to crush the Hagooda forces.

†

The battle is already over. Due to Vralgo's failure the Hagooda forces waiting to drop from the skies have missed their chance. The forces of Colus have managed to drive the Hagooda out of Atork, but the Colus nation has suffered too large a loss . . . the King of Colus.

The great king has left his name in the history of the stellar calendar, and along with the most powerful fatima, has descended into an eternal sleep.

†

News of Hagooda's defeat reaches Dondo swiftly. The capital erupts in chaos, the people screaming for the Queen's head. King Falk enters the palace to find Alamemaios ranting alone, blaming the civil unrest on Rogner, asking if this demon of Babiron has come to laugh at Hagooda. Rogner wonders whether Alamemaios will run or instead die here like a true queen. Refusing to leave she is wounded by stray fire.

As Hagooda's palace burns in the distance, Rogner confesses to his fatima Eatta that it makes him nervous to see any castle burn. Even they have no assurance that they themselves will not fail the same way.

†

Juno, 2989: Two days after the Battle of Atork, the United Nations of Hagooda surrender to the Colus Dynasty. One hundred years later they become the Hagooda Province of Colus.

†

The Colus palace at Jarth is in mourning for their lord. Sharie finds Prince Trao drinking alone in a quiet corner. Trao is surprised to see her,

Lachesis appears

thinking that everyone but Sopp had left Jarth. She informs him that per the orders of Amaterasu, she is to remain on Juno as the A.K.D.'s ambassador.

Deep inside the palace, Sopp has completed sealing off the Junchoon. When it is needed, it will awaken automatically. Clotho, of course, has gone to sleep. No one can awaken her.

"War brings tragedy not only to people, animals, and plants but to the whole planet and all of its inhabitants," Sopp says philosophically.

At Both, the king comes out to have a word with his knights

"Even though we are too well aware of this, we call it forth. Who are we?" Sopp seals the doors to the Junchoon's tomb and hands over the remote control to King Lowpus, now the acting ruler of the Colus Dynasty.

For a long time Lachesis stands alone before the cold, unfeeling doors of the tomb. Eventually she is joined by Elmelah, Colus's widow.

"Do fatimas feel sadness when something like this happens to a sister?" Lachesis only returns her gaze.

"My," Elmelah goads, "you are so beautiful. Incidentally, can you bear children?"

"I will do so when the time comes," Lachesis says evenly.

The Queen asks Lachesis if she has slept with Sopp. Embarrassed, Lachesis murmurs that she is still but a child. Elmelah continues obliviously, saying that even though her husband is dead, she is happy . . . and pregnant, with Colus's son, Colus IIII.

"See, he's moving. It's funny . . . even after falling in love with a fatima, becoming a knight and a king, men still come back to me, asking to be let out." She cautions Lachesis that all men are like this, and tells her not to let Amaterasu do the same to her. "It's best to make men chase you for, say, several million light years."

Lachesis laughs in agreement. Elmelah offers thanks to the dormant Clotho for protecting the nation. When the time comes for her to take Colus away it will no longer matter. Elmelah will be long gone.

"I send my gratitude in place of the King's. Good night, Clotho."

Epilogue

On its way to the Northe System, an A'p Temple Knight battleship shelters the only surviving Boowrey Knight, Canzian of the Kneue Syltiss. Canzian awakens to find his fatima Parahcha and two A'p Knights at his bedside. He also notices his own new right arm.

Sir Gila and Sir Yarbo apologize for the cosmetic differences, saying they had no matching spares on board. It should take three months for his injuries to heal completely, they add.

When Canzian learns that Parahcha pulled him out of the battle rather than letting him die with Vralgo he becomes livid with rage and begins to beat Parahcha nearly to death. The two appalled A'p Knights stop him, reminding him that he should be grateful to be alive; they couldn't even *find* the bodies of his fellow Boowrey.

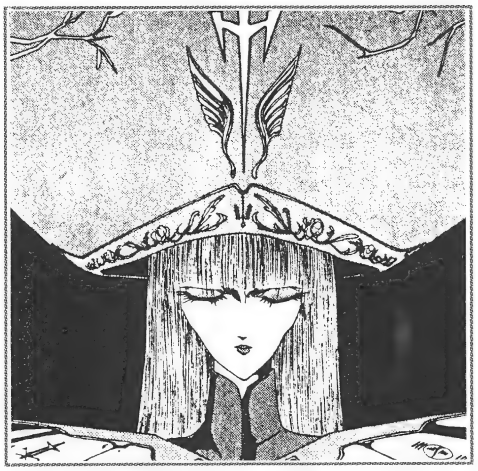
Canzian must still report to his emperor in order to complete his mission. He is further chastised for losing five of the Boowrey mortar headds.

"I would have thought that you would have been more considerate of those who would use them next," says Gila.

"We'll soon be at Kalamity, so don't do anything strange on our ship," adds Yarbo.

†

Kalamity Goderce, Capital of the Philmore Empire, Castle Proton. Bruno Canzian returns to the castle in self-imposed disgrace to report to King Lader on the failure of their mission and on the death of Vralgo. Bruno returns Vralgo's



Clotho dreams of S.C. 4071

brooch and then, drawing his spadd as if to kill himself screams, "Long live King Lader!"

The assembled knights rush forward but it is Lader himself who reaches Bruno first, knocking the spadd from his hand.

"My Lord, why do you stop me, why won't you let me die?"

"Fool! Who do you think you are? You are a Knight of Lader. I will not allow you to choose to die!" shouts the enraged king.

That night Lader laments with his fatima Kratoughma over the death of his beloved Vralgo. Sir Vralgo was the son King Lader never had, and it's quite probable that he would have been Lader's successor. Lader confesses that he admired King Colus III for being a great knight loved by his people, honored by a death in battle. In tribute to the fallen king, Lader decides to rest his hand for a while and raises his cup in toast to his valiant enemy.

Commenting on the beauty of his planet, the partially recovered Bruno stands once again in the uniform of a Kneue Syltiss knight.

The bruised and bandaged Parahcha stands timidly behind her master. Noticing her pitiful gaze, Bruno assures her that she will not die.

"I don't want *you* to die," she whispers.

Bruno is annoyed. All this fatima seems to care about is him! "You keep repeating the same things over and over," he chastises. "That's why you are only dolls, and not humans."

"I don't want you to die," Parahcha repeats tearfully. Bruno almost snaps, stopping just short of striking her when he sees not a stupid doll but a frightened little girl. Thinking better of his actions, Bruno apologizes to her and thanks her for saving him. She is speechless.

"Master . . . "

Looking around to make sure that no one is watching him, Bruno takes Parahcha's hand and looking deep into her bewildered eyes says, "I think I've been captured by your grasp, but maybe that's not so bad." ■

SOUNDS OF THE NEW EARTH

THE MUSIC AND VISION OF RYUICHI SAKAMOTO

By Robert Napton and David Riddick

In 1987, the extraordinary film *Wings of Oneamis, Royal Space Force* premiered in the United States and was released domestically in Japan during the same year. With a production budget of over eight billion yen, *Oneamis* is a visual tour de force capable of awakening a fresh sense of wonder in even the most jaded of hearts.

Regarded by many to be one of the greatest animated films ever, *Oneamis* (see ANIMAG No. 3) is both a visual tour de force as well as a look into a fascinating Earth-like world experiencing the wonder of its first manned space flight.

One of *Oneamis*' m ost impressive elements is the haunting, evocative soundtrack by Ryuichi Sakamoto, one of the few Japanese musicians to have major impact outside of Japan (he now lives in New York with his musician/songwriter wife, Akiko Yano). Sakamoto is best known in the United States as the Academy Award-winning soundtrack composer (with David Byrne and Cong Su) for Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor* and as one of the founding members of the techno-pop band Yellow Magic Orchestra (YMO).

Sakamoto was graduated from Tokyo's elite University of Art with a Master of Fine Arts in 1976. Although trained as a classical musician, Sakamoto chose to expand beyond the horizons of his college education with his first solo album, "The Thousand Knives of Ryuichi Sakamoto," available domestically from Denon/A&M.

Through this effort Sakamoto met drummer Yukihiro Takahashi and bass player/keyboardist Haruomi Hosono. Together they formed the now-legendary group YMO which, like Germany's Kraftwerk, revolutionized the field of electronic music and pioneered the use of digital sampling. During the course of nine albums and two world tours, YMO and Sakamoto established themselves as leaders in the international musical scene.

YMO was disbanded in 1983, the same year Sakamoto produced his first film soundtrack, *Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence*. It was because of YMO, Sakamoto says, that he was exposed to the many diverse types of music and musicians that would later help him to develop his distinct style.

"After the band had broken up I really wanted to mix, combine . . . using technologies and ethnic music," Sakamoto says. This fusion was apparent in his first work after YMO's breakup, "Ongaku Zukan" (or "Illustrated Musical Encyclopedia," produced by MID/School). "Ongaku Zukan" required 20 months of experimentation in sampling and synth-sound to unite everything from Tibetan and Japanese melodies to Thai, big band and jazz influences.

"Ongaku Zukan" signalled the emergence of Sakamoto's musical and personal philosophy defining him not simply as a "Japanese composer" but as a citizen of the world capable of crossing any cultural boundaries through his music.

All of Sakamoto's releases since "Ongaku Zukan" reflect his vision of exploration: "Esperanto" (1985, MID/School) was created and performed live to accompany a performance of Molissa Fenley's avant-garde dance group; "Futurist" (1986, MID/School), based on Marinetti's fascist movement of early 1900s Italy, is arguably Sakamoto's most brilliant effort, fusing everything from American hip-hop to Italian opera; "Neo Geo" (1987, Epic/Sony) combines traditional Okinawan songs with American beats; and finally "Beauty" (1989, Virgin), combining a complete range of international musicians and vocalists, is the apotheosis of Sakamoto's musical synthesis.

Last fall, with the arrival of the "Beauty" video, interest was renewed in Sakamoto's genius. Available as a domestic release from Virgin Video, "Beauty" is a live concert video version of Sakamoto's most recent tour combined with rare interview footage. "Beauty" features eight live tracks and the studio video

Ryuichi Sakamoto performing "Beauty" live at the Palace in Los Angeles, California

for Prince/Paisley Park protégé Jill Jones' "You Do Me," which was filmed in London and combines funk and Okinawan chants.

Other live tracks taped during a Japan performance feature Sakamoto's "Neo Geo Ensemble": Nicky Holland on keyboards and vocals; Sara Lee on bass; Dougie Brown on drums; Ellery McDonald on guitar; Cyro Baptista on percussion; and Yoriko Ganeko, Misako Koja, and Kazumi Tamake performing *sanshin* (a string instrument), samba and vocals.

The live video does a fine job of capturing the delicate and elusive qualities of Sakamoto's music. Live tracks available only on the video release include "The Okinawan Song" from "Neo Geo" as well as the YMO classic, "Tong Poo."

Also released last fall was the *Wings of Oneamis* Laser Disc Memorial Box, a three-disc collection (Bandai/Emotion), featuring not only the complete *Oneamis* film but 70 minutes of previously unreleased background music set to *Oneamis* character designer Yoshiyuki Sadamoto's image boards. The rarely seen pre-production short for *Royal Space Force* (which also served as its pilot film) is included as well.

Sakamoto's *Oneamis* soundtrack was originally released during 1987 under the French title "Aîle de Honneamise." The Laser Disc Box features the missing BGM cuts not contained on the soundtrack or the "Aîle de Honneamise" image sketch.

Fans of *Oneamis* or anime in general are encouraged to look beyond the conventional soundtracks and "here today, gone tomorrow" Japanese pop icons to seek out Sakamoto's world of music, a world that can range from the tranquil sounds of "Beauty" to the nightmarish and frightening world of last year's *The Handmaid's Tale* (GNP Crescendo).

Sakamoto's exploration and experimentation continues with Bertolucci's *The Sheltering Sky* (winner of the Golden Globe award for best original score), and an upcoming solo project. Sakamoto's music actualizes the reality of a new landscape where London is by Tokyo and Bali is adjacent to Arabia.

"And no one existence can be given priority over another," Sakamoto says in the "Neo Geo" tour book. "Where one can only accept diversity and respect differences." Where Sakamoto can create the sounds of the new earth. ■

Special thanks to David Rubinson, KAB America, Inc., Lisa Ventura and John, Virgin

New Type

Hobbies and Toys

Max Factory

1/12 Scale	Guyver 1,2,3, Gregole, Ramotith, Vamore, Zerbebuth, Thancrus, Derzerb, Zytole

Zero

	Godzilla DX 89'

B&K

1/12 Scale	Angel Cop
1/6 Scale	Katty
1/20 Scale	Gundam Figures
1/20 Scale	Gobiw
1/12 Scale	Iczer 1
1/12 Scale	Iczer 2

Volks

1/8 Scale	Silent Mobius, Lrbia Maverick
1/8 Scale	Silent Mobius, Katsumi Liqueur
1/12 Scale	Silent Mobius, Disent

B-Club

1/144 Scale	RMS-154 Barzam
1/144 Scale	RGM-79D GM Command

MODEL, GARAGE KITS & OTHER JAPANESE ANIMATION GOODS

1531 10th Avenue (cross street Kirkham)
San Francisco Ca 94122
Tel: (415) 731-3077

Store hours: Sat.-Sun.10:30am-6:30pm Regular hours Mon.-Fri.6:30pm-9:30pm By appointment only Mail order catalog $ 2.00

GAINAX (Producers of Wings of Oneamis and Nadia of the Mysterious Seas)
in association with Studio Proteus and the Creators of BayCon, present:

AnimeCon '91
The Anime & Manga Convention

August 30th to September 2nd, 1991 at The Red Lion Hotel, San Jose, California

Confirmed Guests of Honor:
(In Alphabetical Order)

Johji Manabe
Creator, artist, and storywriter for *Outlanders*

Leiji Matsumoto
Creator, character designer, and storywriter for *Captain Harlock* and *Queen Millenia*

Haruhiko Mikimoto
Character designer and illustrator for *Macross* and *Gunbuster*

Toshio Okada
President of Gainax, writer for *Gunbuster,* and Chairman of *Daicon III* and *IV*

Katsuhiro Otomo
Creator, artist, and storywriter for *Akira*

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto
Character designer for *Wings of Oneamis,* and *Nadia of the Mysterious Seas*

Kenichi Sonoda
Character designer and illustrator for *Gall Force, Bubble Gum Crisis,* and *Riding Bean*

Additional Guests:
Jerry Beck
L. Lois Buhalis
Lea Hernandez
Trish Ledoux
Carl Macek
Ken Macklin
Tom Orzechowski
Toren Smith
Rick Sternbach
Adam Warren
Toshifumi Yoshida
and more to come!

The Live Program Tracks
In addition to lectures, panel discussions and presentations by our Guests of Honor, AnimeCon '91's live programming will also include creative professionals from the anime and manga industry here in America.

The Film Program
Featuring both 16mm and 35mm anime on a big screen, theatre seating and sound, the film program will run 24 hours a day and offer repeat showings of nearly everything we run.

Video Program One
Featuring large screen projection tv, stereo sound, and 24-hour operation, this video theatre will focus on feature-length films and OAVs. The program will also be simulcast via the Red Lion's tv system to all hotel rooms.

Video Program Two
Offering large screen projection tv, stereo sound, and 24-hour operation, this second video theatre will feature episodes of television anime shows. This program will be simulcast via a second channel on the hotel tv system.

The Dealers' Room
This will be *the place* to find the best in anime and manga collectibles, from posters to film books to t-shirts to fanzines.

The Art Show
The first section will feature works by artists from Japan. The second section of the display will be a traditional convention art show, where space will be available for anime- or manga-related work by fans and pros.

Additional Events
Plus: Opening Ceremonies, a Hall Costume Contest, the Meet-The-Guests Reception, Special Auctions, Parties, Door Prizes, Brunch with the Guests of Honor, Trivia Contests, Autograph Sessions, Gaming, Displays, Dinner Banquet with the Guests of Honor, and a few surprises.

Accommodations
The Red Lion Hotel is five minutes from the San Jose International Airport, and is easily accessible by auto and public transit. Single rooms have a King size bed, and Doubles feature two Queen size beds. All rooms have color TVs, which are VCR-compatible; and for a small fee the Red Lion will connect your unit up to their system.

For hotel reservations, phone: 408/453-4000. Be sure to mention AnimeCon '91 to get the special low convention rate.

Room Rates:
(Per Night)

$62.00 Single	$75.00 Triple
$69.00 Double	$81.00 Quad

Attending Memberships:
(Admission to the convention for all four days)
$35 to March 15, 1991
$40 to August 15, 1991
$45 at the door

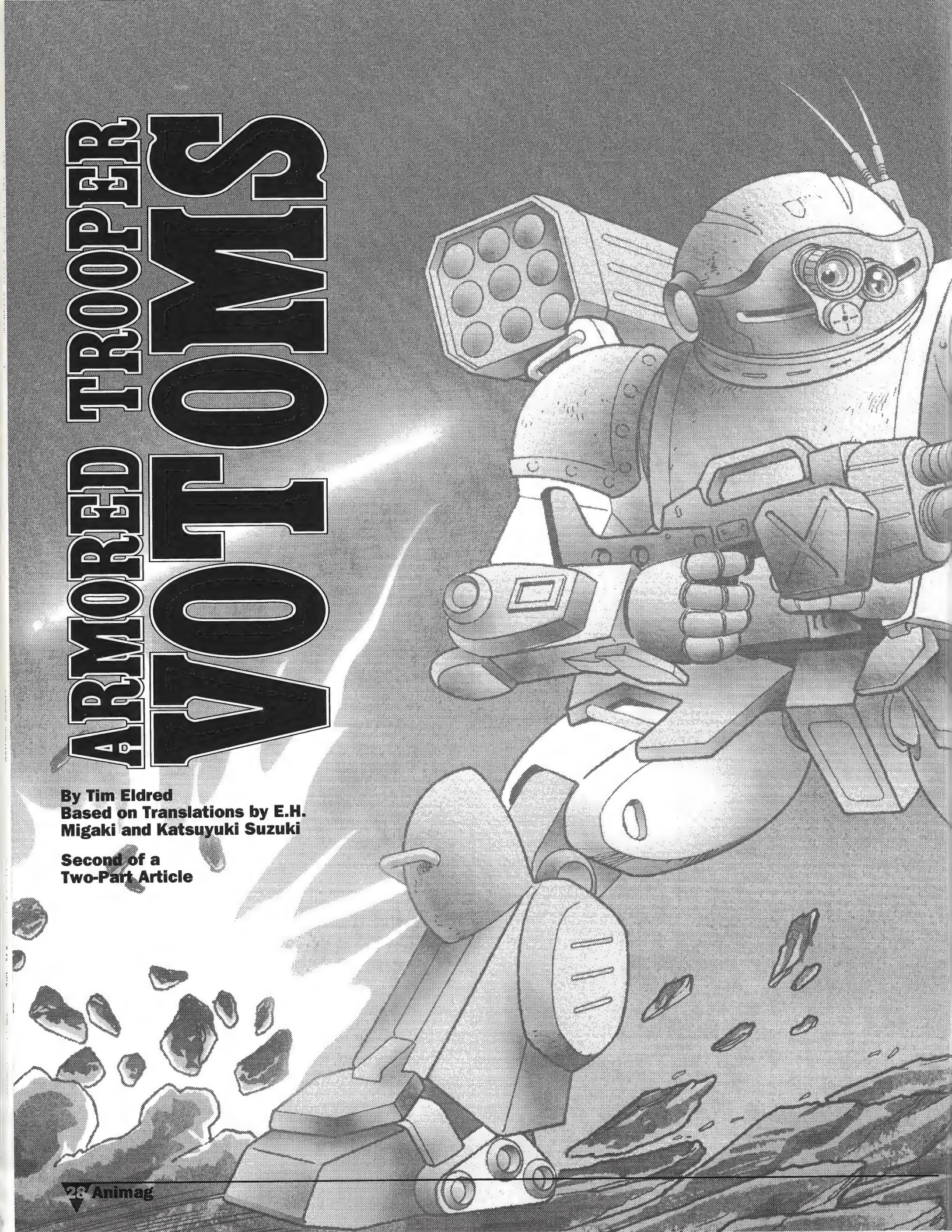
Supporting Memberships:
$5 *(For those who can't attend; you receive copies of all convention publications: Progress Reports, Program Book and Synopsis Book)*

Dealers' Tables:
(Includes one attending membership)
$110 to March 15, 1991
$145 to August 15, 1991
$160 after August 15 (if available)

To purchase Memberships or Dealers' Tables, or for more information, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

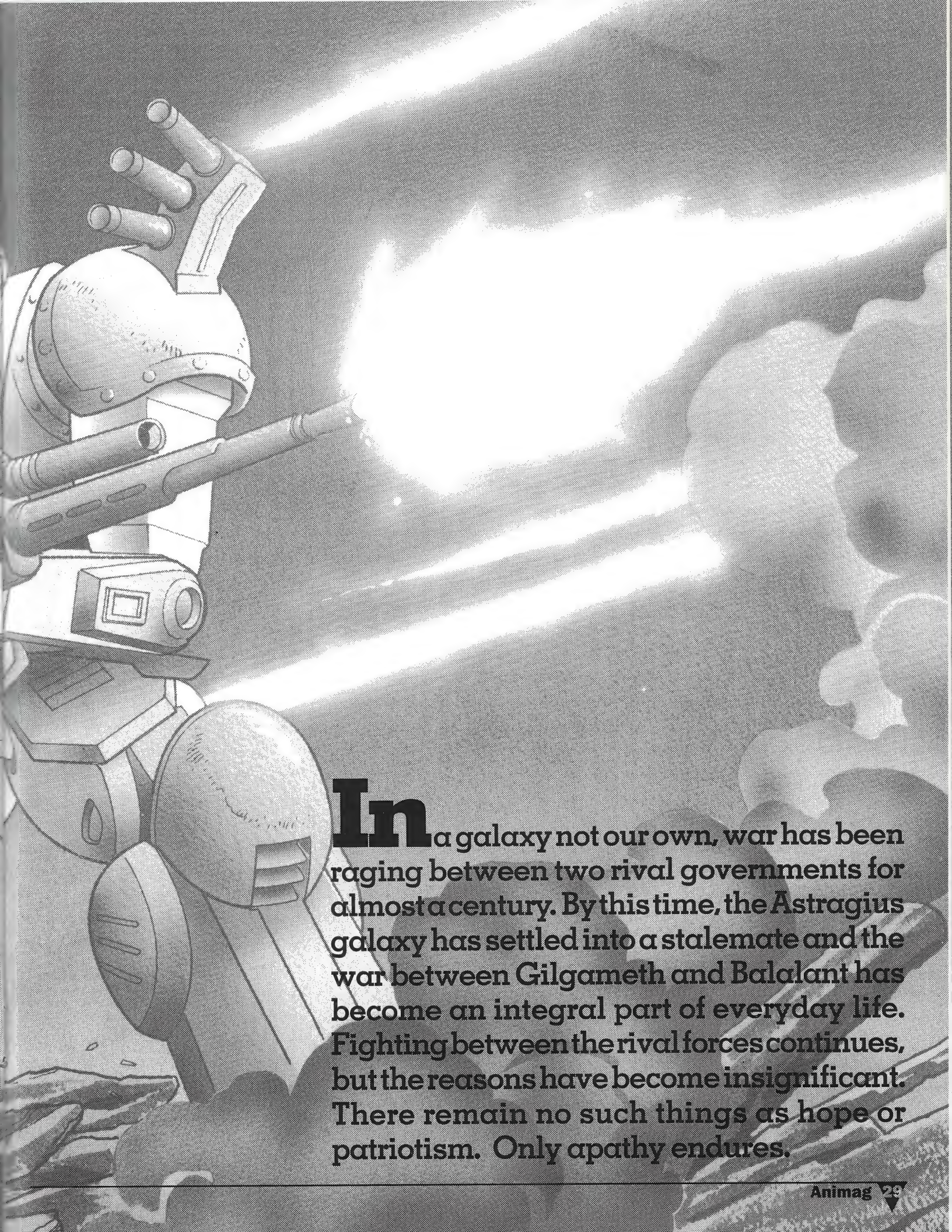
AnimeCon '91
3145 Geary Boulevard
Suite 524
San Francisco, CA 94118

ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS



By Tim Eldred
Based on Translations by E.H. Migaki and Katsuyuki Suzuki

Second of a Two-Part Article



In a galaxy not our own, war has been raging between two rival governments for almost a century. By this time, the Astragius galaxy has settled into a stalemate and the war between Gilgameth and Balalant has become an integral part of everyday life. Fighting between the rival forces continues, but the reasons have become insignificant. There remain no such things as hope or patriotism. Only apathy endures.

The first twist the war takes in its early days is the advent of the ArmoredTrooper, or VOTOM [*V(ertical) O(ne-man) T(ank for) O(ffense and) M(aneuvers)*] in scientific jargon. Similar to the powered suits in Robert Heinlein's classic science fiction novel, *Starship Troopers*, the ATs make possible a range of combat that escalates the war even further.

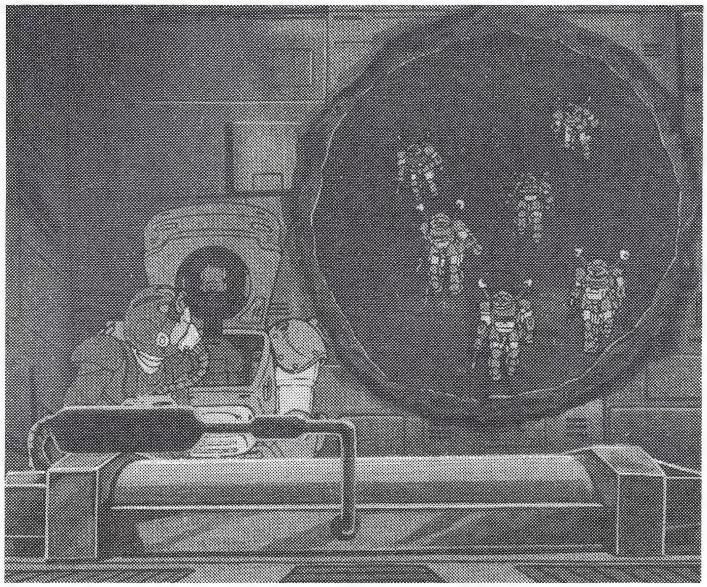
As the *Votoms* series begins, the next such superweapon is nearing completion. Things are about to get worse.

Chronologically, the story actually begins in the last animated video release, *Red Shoulder Document: Roots of Ambition*, set just over a year before the first episode of the television series.

On one of Gilgameth's training planets, Odon, resides the base of Red Shoulder Battalion, an elite unit of AT pilots with a reputation for such violence and corruption that they are nicknamed the "Bloodsucker Squad." The leader and creator of this battalion, General Yoran Peruzen, has pulled some bureaucratic strings to enlist a certain young AT pilot, Chirico Cuvie, into the Red Shoulders.

Throughout his training Chirico remains a silent enigma, an attitude that earns him only resentment from his peers. The base commander, wondering if Chirico was sent in as a covert spy or assassin, sends men to kill him but this proves difficult when Chirico emerges as the most resourceful survivor in the battalion. His reaction time is utterly inhuman, and when Peruzen intervenes in the assassination attempt against Chirico, it is revealed that Peruzen has been scrutinizing Chirico since birth in a quest to find a genetically superior warrior.

Some time later, Chirico takes part in the battalion's ultimate mission: engaging Balalant forces and annihilating Sunsa, a planet deep inside strategic territory. It is a mission that



the government does not expect Chirico to survive . . . but he does.

EPISODES 1-13 (TV Series)

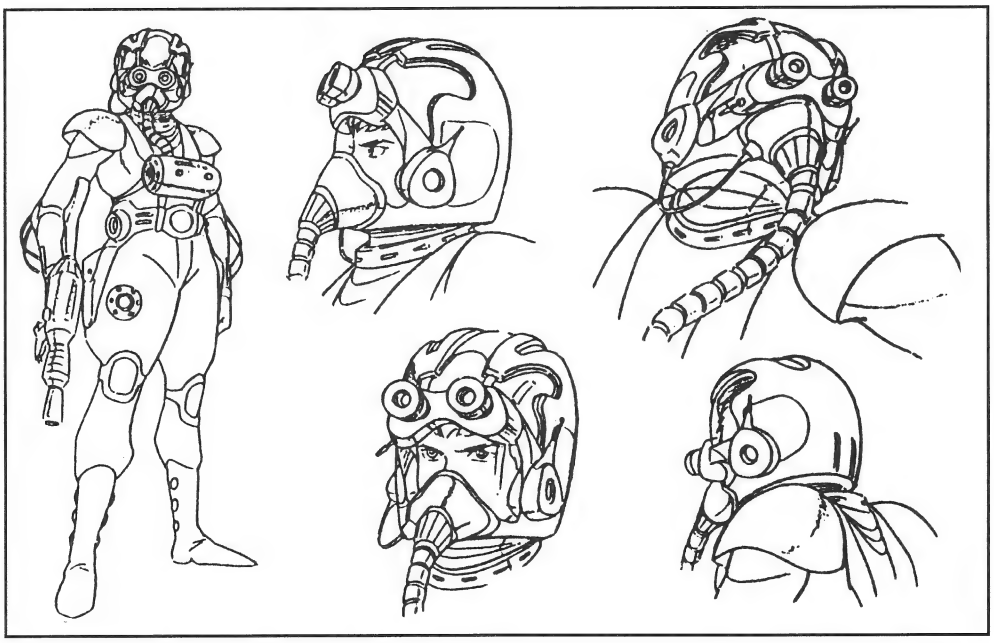
Following the Sunsa mission, Red Shoulder Battalion is disbanded before its various atrocities can be linked to its leaders. Chirico and his platoon are separated and sent to lesser posts. As the first episode of the TV series opens, a quartet of Gilgameth officers conduct an illegal operation that will soon lead to their defection. Under the command of General Albert Kiri and four of his staff, a unit of ATs raid an asteroid base belonging to the Merukian Army, an ally of Gilgameth. On this asteroid is a huge cache of gold, their main objective. But there is also something else.

It is to this platoon that Chirico Cuvie has been assigned. Unknown to him, an order has also been passed down to terminate his life. Chirico notices the Merukian insignia on the ATs they destroy and protests the action, causing him to be left behind on guard duty while the gold is absconded.

Ending up in a dark chamber, Chirico finds a mysterious, cylindrical machine and opens it to discover the other objective: a woman lying in a tube of energy. Chirico is shocked when she opens her eyes and looks straight into his own. Trembling, he closes the tube as the others approach and order him out into space to spot incoming vessels.

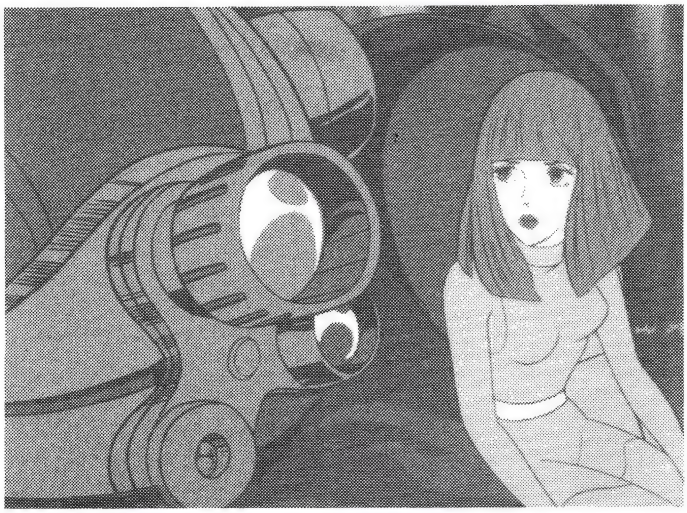
He leaves the asteroid and looks back to see a bomb flying straight for him. The explosion hurls him deep into space, turning his AT into a coffin . . . until a warship of the Merukian Army picks him up. The officer in charge, Colonel Jan Paul Rochina, interrogates Chirico about his involvement in the raid but the fugitive soldier knows nothing of his former commanders' subterfuge.

Taken to Planet Merukia, Chirico is tortured further but escapes his prison and flees. He now believes he has been betrayed. Revenge is foremost in his mind but he also



harbors the image of the woman he saw on the asteroid. What Chirico does not yet realize is that there are plots within plots, and that his destiny is linked with the woman's in a way that will change the galaxy forever.

Months pass, in which a truce is signed between Gilgameth and Balalant after the decisive raid on Sunsa. The war now cools, but stagnation remains and tensions persist. Chirico wanders across Merukia to the city of Uoodo, formerly a war base but now a dirty pesthole of vagrants. Corruption runs rampant in Uoodo's "peace preservation police," which is taken over by a pair of familiar faces: Boro and Esukai, two of Kiri's officers from the asteroid raid. They now masquerade as important personages to conceal their identities and simultaneously drain the city of a valuable mineral called jijirium, which (in addition to its market price) serves an important purpose in their organization, now called the "Secret Society."



Chirico hides out in a junkyard from biker thugs and meets a trio of Uoodo citizens: Gotho (a scrap dealer), Coconna (a street girl), and Vanilla (a local bookie). Realizing Chirico is a former AT pilot, Gotho quickly sets him up as a contender in Uoodo's battle ring arena, where spectators gamble on mock AT combat games.

Chirico reluctantly agrees to participate but his actions soon draw the attention of both the police and a mysterious woman called "Phantom Lady" by the locals. The woman, Chirico discovers, has attended every recent battle ring bout in order to find a "special pilot."

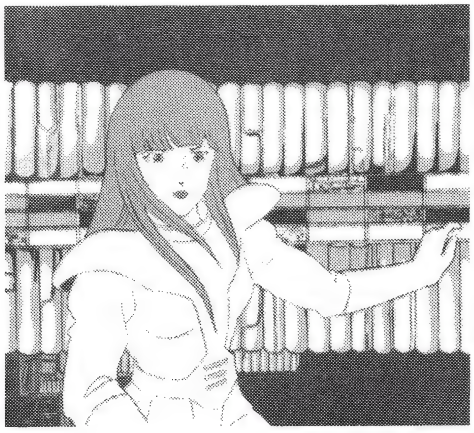
Chirico clashes with Uoodo police in a cat-and-mouse game of revenge that is watched intently by Colonel Rochina of the Merukian Army. Before Chirico escaped from him, a tracer was surgically implanted in his body. Rochina hopes to track Chirico back to his treacherous leaders.

The element that ties all these factions together is the Phantom Lady. Along the way, Chirico discovers that she is the same woman he saw on the asteroid and was in an early stage of development at the time. Her real name, Chirico learns, is Proto-1. She is the new weapon being developed for the battlefront and is a genetically created warrior called a "perfect soldier." Her artificial nature requires that she periodically bathe in jijirium energies, and therefore cannot defect with Chirico when he asks. Chirico gives her a name of her own . . . Fyana.

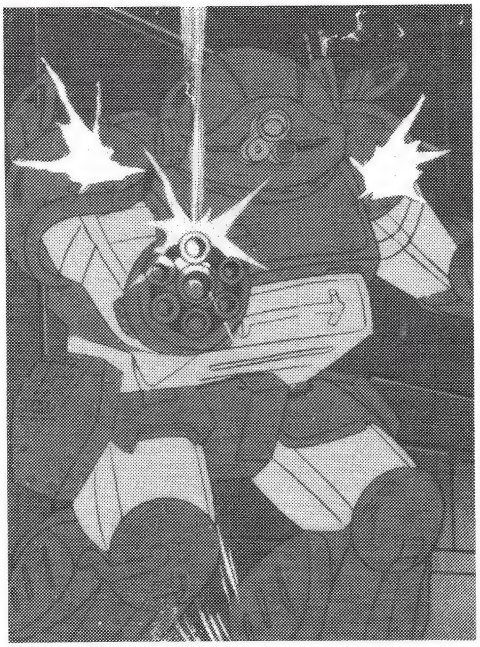
When Rochina puts the pieces together he orders an AT attack on Uoodo that will serve the dual purpose of capturing the rebel officers and recovering Proto-1. Rochina fails at both tasks and Fyana escapes with her superiors, leaving Chirico and his new companions in the midst of a bloodbath.

THE LAST RED SHOULDER (OAV)

Frustrated at losing his operation in Uoodo, Albert Kiri moves the Secret Society into its next phase: development of Proto-2, the next perfect soldier. To this end, Kiri and the Secret Society combine their resources with retired general Yoran Peruzen, who resides in the underground ruins of a base in the Merukian desert.



Meanwhile, Chirico is reunited with three of the toughest former Red Shoulder platoon members who agree to accompany him in one last raid on Peruzen's base guarded by the rest of the Red Shoulders.



In a pastoral forest setting, the base's garden, a sleeping figure is awakened by Fyana's soft voice. The figure is Proto-2, whom Fyana has named "Ypsilon." Fyana guides him through this new world with her gentle teachings. It is not long, however, before Ypsilon's artificially ingrained killer instinct manifests itself, and while Chirico and his companions prepare to strike, Fyana learns that Peruzen himself designed Ypsilon to be the ultimate death machine, the one who will rid Peruzen of the troublesome Chirico at last.

As the Secret Society prepares Ypsilon for the task, Chirico and the others attack the base. They soon battle their way inside but are met by Ypsilon, who proceeds to pick them off one by one.

Chirico once again escapes through luck and wit in time to witness Peruzen's demise. Fyana has been taken away from him, and Chirico is even more determined to free her from her captors.

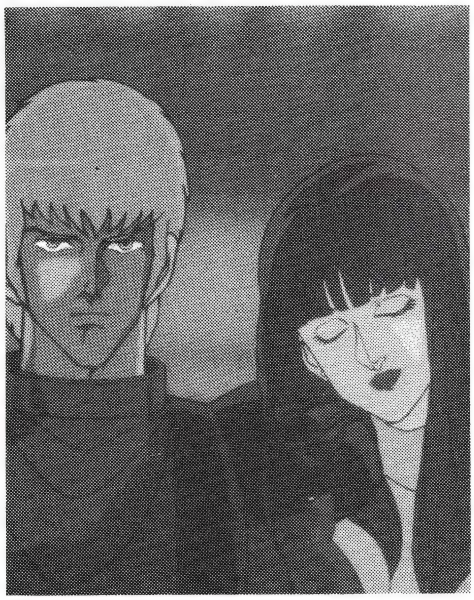
EPISODES 14-27 (TV Series)

Left to wander again, Chirico makes his way to the jungle-saturated nation of Kummen. Rochina and his supervisors watch Chirico's progress with interest, for Kummen is currently embroiled in civil war and they believe the Secret Society may be involved.

Chirico enlists as a mercenary at Assemble EX-10, one of several paramilitary bases scattered throughout Kummen to eradicate the Bera Guerillas. The Bera Guerillas' king, Kanjielman III, refuses at first to allow modern ways to destroy the agricultural kingdom his fathers died to create.

Resigned to fighting fire with same, Kanjielman reluctantly accepts the aid of the Secret Society. Represented now by Boro, the cartel cares about little more than robbing Kummen of its rich jijirium deposits.

After escaping the destruction of Uodo, Gotho, Coconna and Vanilla make their way to Kummen and parlay their city-born resource-



fulness into a nightclub established in a village near EX-10. They are overjoyed at their reunion with Chirico, but with skirmishes constantly erupting with the Bera Guerrillas, Chirico has little time to rest before he is thrust back into battle.

Platoons of ATs clash time and again in the dark jungles of Kummen, and Chirico soon finds himself up against a lethal opponent—the Bera war leader, a maniacal demon who pilots the "Blue AT." When Chirico first glimpses the Blue AT's fighting style he is certain it's Fyana, reasoning that only a perfect soldier could fight that efficiently.

The pilot of the Blue AT turns out to be none other than Ypsilon, who has now fallen in love with Proto-1 and has vowed to destroy Chirico forever. The plot thickens once again when Chirico finds Fyana in Kanjielman's castle and makes several attempts to free her. By now Rochina has joined the conflict, effectively mopping up another Secret Society operation.

This time, however, Chirico gains a bit of revenge by spiriting Fyana away (with a portable jijirium cylinder) and by witnessing the end of one more former commander, Boro. One enemy still survives . . . Ypsilon.

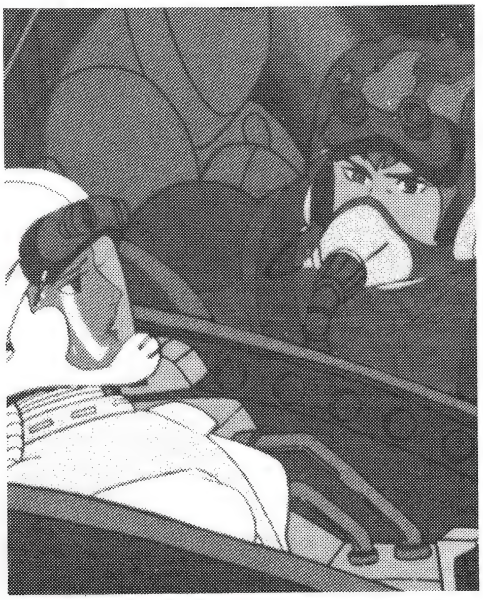
EPISODES 28-38 (TV Series)

Having narrowly escaped the fall of Kummen in a tiny space shuttle, Chirico and Fyana next find themselves on board a gigantic, unnamed spaceship. A search through the lumbering vessel reveals full weapon stocks but no crew, only automatic controls that cannot be shut down.

Resigned to go wherever the ship takes them, the two at last begin to enjoy a quiet, romantic moment when an anthem blasts through every cabin. Following it to a film archives room, Chirico is horrified to witness records of the Red Shoulder Battalion and all its atrocities. He is haunted by the nightmare as the ship carries them into Balalant territory and a waiting battlefleet. Forced to defend themselves, Chirico and Fyana draw the attention of the Secret Society and Rochina, both of who want to resume the chase. The Gilgameth Army is against taking action that might endanger their treaty with the Balalant, so Rochina decides to defect and follow his own path.

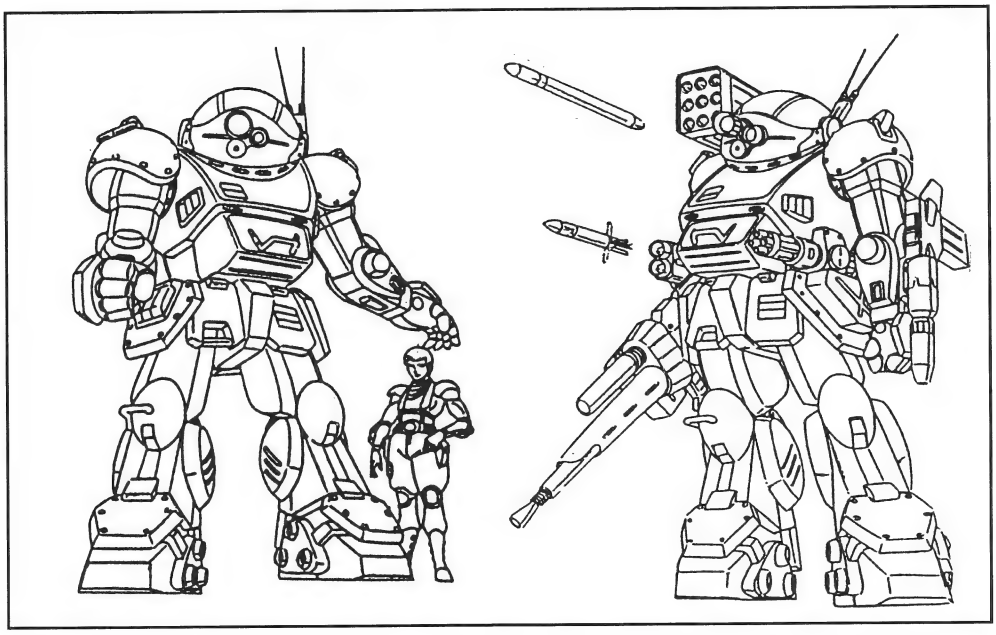
Ypsilon, meanwhile, is obsessed with destroying Chirico and reclaiming Proto-1. Ypsilon leads several attacks on the two, all the while observed by the Secret Society's twin scientists Aron and Guran, who are assigned with the task of learning all they can about the perfect soldier.

Besieged by both Ypsilon and the Balalant, Chirico and Fyana crash-land on an airless desert world littered with wreckage from the war. Convinced that some outside force wanted to send him here to Sunsa, Chirico is subsequently surprised by the reappearance of Gotho and the others, who currently employ themselves as scrap merchants. Their supplier is



a hard-bitten woman named Sophie, who offers the two fugitives shelter in her fortress.

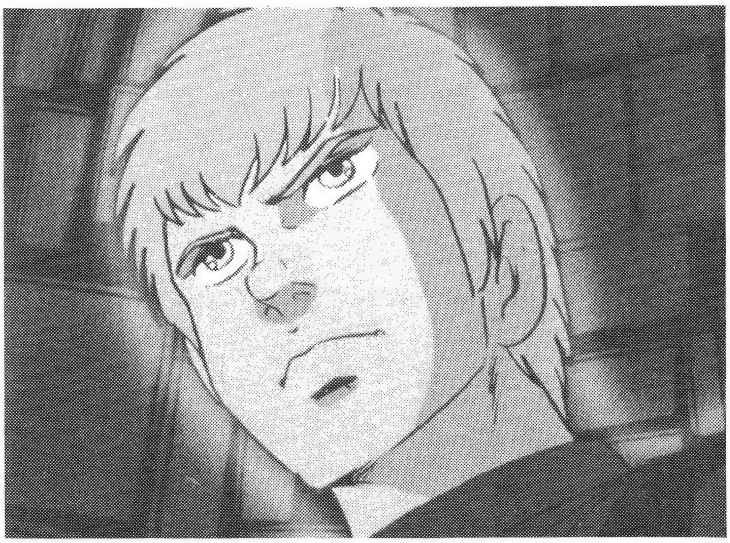
Ypsilon and his AT army are not far behind, however, and when Coconna accidentally reveals Chirico as a former Red Shoulder (one of the demons responsible for the destruction of Sunsa), Sophie is only too willing to turn him over to his enemies. The ensuing battle brings the Balalant Army down on them all and scatters the survivors, including Sophie, who angrily tracks Chirico across the treacherous desert. Gotho's group finds Chirico in time to stop Sophie but their problems aren't over—Fyana has not taken a jijirium bath in days and is now close to death. Finally reaching the ruins of an old city Chirico locates the substance needed to save her as Rochina makes his move.



Now a member of the Balalant Army with his own fleet, Rochina captures the entire group in a gambit to pit Chirico against Ypsilon in a final confrontation. When that battle finally begins, Rochina studies Chirico's every move; despite Ypsilon's genetically perfected abilities, Chirico matches him blow for blow, fighting far beyond any normal human's capability.

"I see now," Rochina shouts. "Chirico is a natural perfect soldier!"

Shocked, Fyana stops the fight, but not in time to save Ypsilon who dies insisting that Chirico *must* be a perfect soldier, for he could not bear the thought of being defeated by a mere human. Finally confronted with the



missing links to his true heritage, Chirico leaves Fyana in Rochina's care and flies to Planet Quent, where Rochina promises he will find the answers.

EPISODES 40-52 (TV Series)

Although Ypsilon is gone, the Secret Society still pursues Chirico, who has now earned the attention of the cartel's leader, Albert Kiri. Also intrigued by the mystery of the legendary planet, Kiri monitors Chirico's progress via Aron and Guran, who are less careful about Quent's inhabitants than Kiri likes; this is the realm of the fabled Quentmen, who once held power over the entire Astragius galaxy but gave it up three thousand years ago to become desert dwellers and mercenaries. Since then, every attempt by the major armies to land here has ended with the intruders vanishing without a trace.

Also casting an eye on Quent, Rochina deduces that he has been following the commands of a superior mind . . . something as yet unseen.

Fortunately for Chirico he once more meets Lou Shako, who had previously fought with him in Kummen and now guides him through the lore of the Quentmen in hope of finding the hidden connections with Chirico's past.

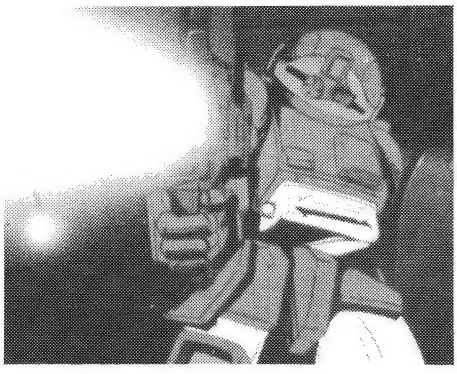
The Gilgameth Army sends a fleet to join the multi-sided pursuit under the ruse of reclaiming Proto-1. The delicate situation is finally pushed over the edge and turned into a full-scale firefight.

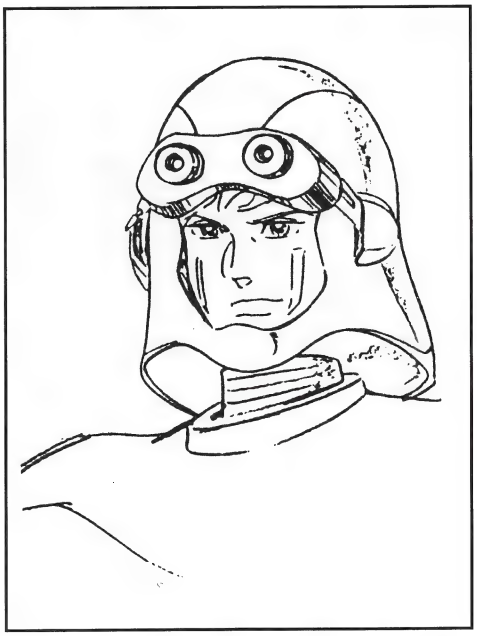
When Quent itself fires on the fleets of warships battling in orbit, Chirico, Rochina and the others flee directly into the hands of Albert Kiri. The leader of the Secret Society has little time to gloat before his ship is seized by an unseen force.

"Wiseman," Chirico proclaims, finally giving a name to the unknown entity that has been manipulating all of them for its own inscrutable purposes.

The ship is drawn to a machine planet where Chirico speaks to Wiseman's mind and all is revealed.

Three thousand years ago, the planet Quent reached the peak of its technological and philosophical existence. At that point, rebel elements proclaimed themselves physically perfect as well, and suggested that they could now conquer any world they desired. Horrified by the implication, the rest of the populace exiled these "mutants" and abandoned the culture that lead to this point in their evolution. Hundreds of years later, the mutants return to pool their knowledge into a vast computer they name "Wiseman."





Possessing the mutants' desire for godhood, Wiseman uses its power to influence separate sides of the galaxy into a war. With war, Wiseman says, come technological and physiological advances . . . and eventually, a perfect fighter it can use to rule the entire galaxy. Now, at last, that fighter has appeared . . . Chirico Cuvie!

With this revelation comes a historic truce between the Gilgameth and Balalant, who are now bent on destroying the god and his "successor." The destiny of the Astragius galaxy is at stake.

BIG BATTLE (OAV)

Chirico and company cool their heels after the Wiseman war back on Planet Merukia when it becomes apparent that the war is reviving once again. To meet its new challenge, the Balalant Army is developing its own perfect soldier, a brutal cyborg named Niba with a psychotic obsession against the Red Shoulder Battalion which nearly killed him on the battlefield.

Chirico's arrival is the spark that ignites Niba's flame, and when the resultant big battle ends, both Chirico and Fyana realize that as long as they live and the war is fought, they will only be the tools of others.

Stealing a jijirium hibernation tube, the two float off into deep space. Their friends wonder if they will ever find peace in a galaxy that may never know anything but the hell of war. ■

Tim Eldred is a comic book writer/artist whose credits include Lensman, Captain Harlock, Broid *and* Chaser Platoon, *published by Eternity Comics.*

A Continuing Series on the World Behind the Screen

ANIME JA NAI

By Mark Simmons

Do Not Go Quietly Into That Good Night

Famous Last Words of Anime Characters

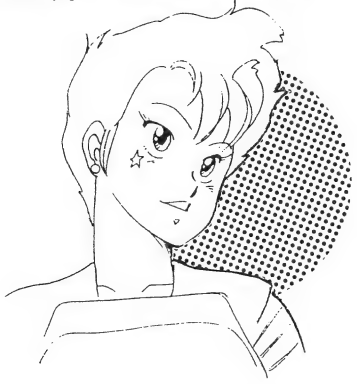
Some die with thoughts of loved ones on their minds; others exit with unrelenting obnoxiousness. Some experience moments (or frequently, several minutes) of brilliant insight as they wait for the Reaper; others shuffle off this mortal coil as confused as they were all along.

This time, Anime Ja Nai pays its respects to the anime dead—the legions of Gundam casualties who act in their last moments as mouthpieces for Tomino's philosophies, the masses of Matsumoto fatalities who pass on with unflinching courage, honor and sentimentality, and their other deceased kinfolk in television, OAV and movie animation. With heartfelt grief and all proper respect, we bring you a selection of parting words from classic anime deaths of the past.

Died with Their Boots On and Their Attitudes Intact

"I was cool, wasn't I . . . ?"

*—Marooned in deep space, combat ace Lufy (*Gal Force*) taking some time during her dying soliloquy for some sincere self-evaluation.*



"Camille Vidan, I may die . . . but I'm taking you with me!"

*—Devious genius Paptimus Scirocco (*Zeta Gundam*), clinging to life long enough to avenge himself on the person who pulped him with the prow of the Wave Rider.*

"I plan to go into outer space, find intelligent life forms who'll give me true eternal life, and then return to Earth as God!"

*—The huge brain of criminal mastermind and Paul Williams-lookalike Momo (*Lupin vs. the Clones, *better known in the U.S. as* Secret of Momo*), just prior to becoming a textbook example of explosive decompression.*

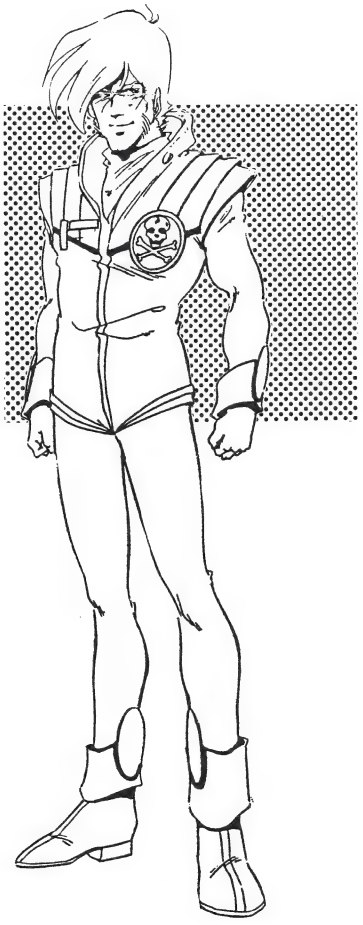
Sentimental to the Bitter End

"Earth . . . everything about it is so dear to me . . . "

*—Grizzled father-figure Admiral Juzo Okita (*Space Cruiser Yamato*), succumbing to fatal-yet-eventually-reversible radiation poisoning.*

"Give my regards to Claudia."

*—The ever-thoughtful Roy Fokker (*Macross: Do You Remember Love?*), who would obviously rather be bleeding to death on his sweetheart's carpet than nobly blowing himself up to protect his fleeing comrades.*



Gundam Characters: Gripping Philosophical Insight in the Face of Death

"A moment ago I realized that the boy [Camille] is special. This understanding turns to resentment . . . perhaps this feeling is the way of the oldtype."

*—The fortunate Lyra Mira Lyra (*Zeta Gundam*), whose mobile suit took long enough to explode that she had enough time to experience this thrilling epiphany.*

"This is what it is to lose in battle."

*—Stalwart soldier Ranba Ral (*Mobile Suit Gundam*) going out in an utterly futile blaze of glory while apparently dictating to an imaginary biographer.*

"I understand now . . . all men do is fight and use women as tools."

*—Char Aznable-squeeze and Scirocco-groupie Reccoa Londo (*Zeta Gundam*), reaching a potentially life-changing realization just a little too late.*

And Now We'll Never Know— Unsolved Mysteries and Wasted Opportunities

"You are from—"

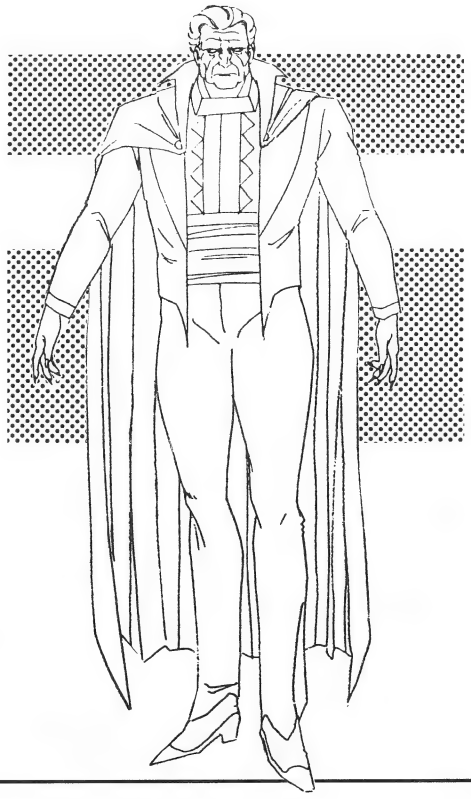
*—Dying android villainess Deela (*Dangaio*), frustrating brainwashed psychic heroine Lamba Nom's desire for biographical information.*

"Camille, you are my—"

*—Aryan Camille-nemesis Jerid Mesa (*Zeta Gundam*), cruelly cheated out of his allotted Gundam-character-about-to-die philosophy time.*

"Could you be—"

*—Vampire overlord Count Lee (*Vampire Hunter D*), recognizing the parentage of Vampire Hunter "Son of Dracula" D just as the supernatural bounty-hunter finishes him off.*



Women Who Love Too Much and the Space Pirate Who Kills Them

"Thank you, Harlock."

*—The turncoat Leotard (*Endless Road SSX*) as the good captain relieves her of her weary existence.*

"Please, Harlock . . . please."

*—Mazone spy Shizuka Namino (*Space Pirate Captain Harlock*), hoping to die at the hand of the elegant pirate rather than that of ambitious young gun Tadashi Daiba.*

"Why won't you kill me, Harlock?"

*—Imperious Mazone Queen Laffresia (*Space Pirate Captain Harlock*), preferring to throw herself upon the scrawny, one-eyed sex symbol's sword [*You're a dead man, Simmons.—Ed.*] rather than live with defeat.*

Existential Angst Hall of Fame Award

"Why? Why? Why?"

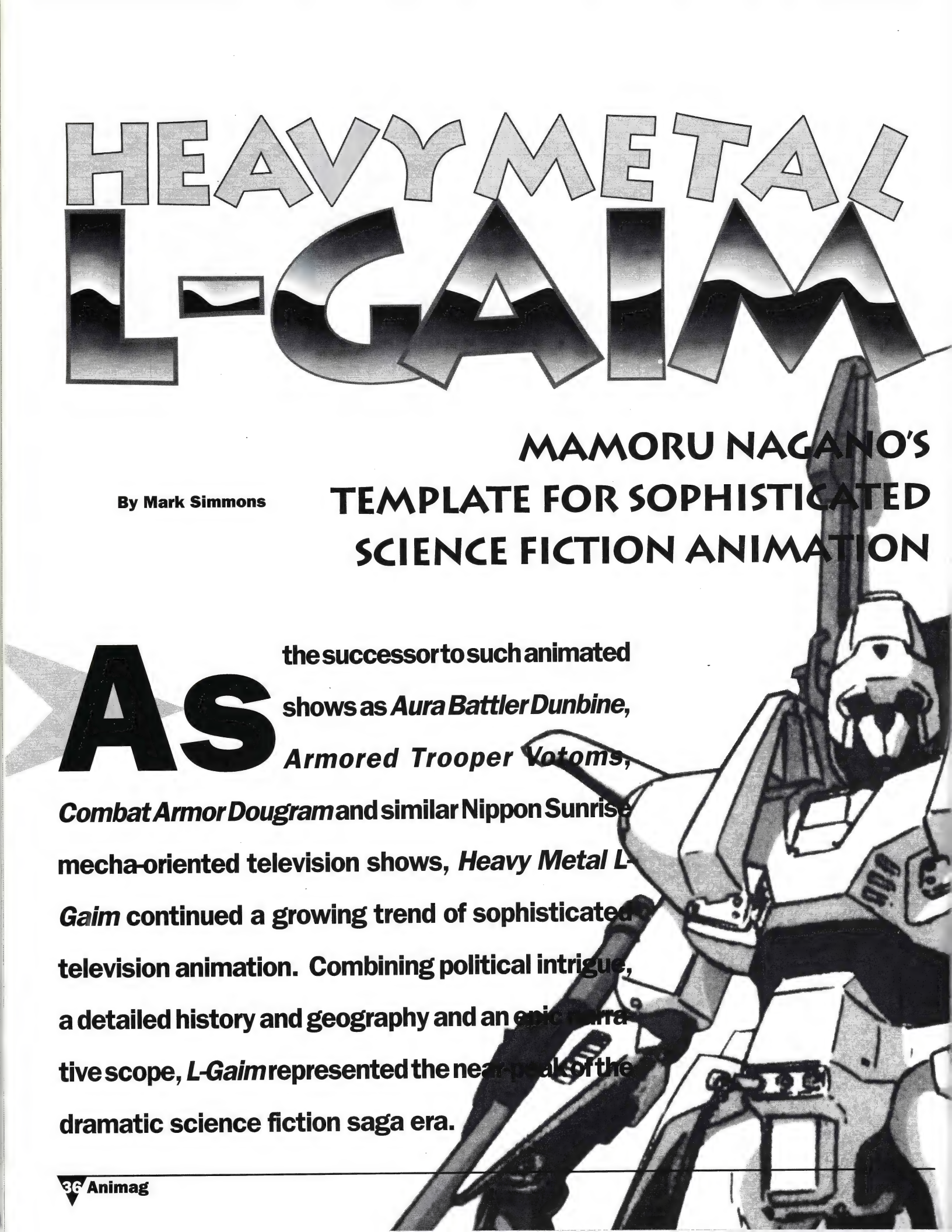
*—Peppy, redheaded amateur filmmaker Tomomi Murashita (*Megazone 23*) as military agents seal her lips permanently.* ■

HEAVY METAL L-GAIM

MAMORU NAGANO'S TEMPLATE FOR SOPHISTICATED SCIENCE FICTION ANIMATION

By Mark Simmons

As the successor to such animated shows as *Aura Battler Dunbine*, *Armored Trooper Votoms*, *Combat Armor Dougram* and similar Nippon Sunrise mecha-oriented television shows, *Heavy Metal L-Gaim* continued a growing trend of sophisticated television animation. Combining political intrigue, a detailed history and geography and an epic narrative scope, *L-Gaim* represented the near-peak of the dramatic science fiction saga era.



L-Gaim debuted on February 4th, 1984 and ran for 54 episodes. The series is memorable as the first artistic triumph of mecha virtuoso Mamoru Nagano, who not only co-wrote the story with Yoshiyuki Tomino of *Gundam* fame but also performed all mecha and character designs. The series has since spanned two compilation videos and an OAV, *Full Metal Soldier*.

Nagano went on to become one of the chief designers (mecha background, character, scenario, etc.) for the groundbreaking animated series *Mobile Suit Zeta Gundam*, where his mecha aesthetics and character fashion sense set a new standard for all anime.

Later, Nagano developed the historical framework of *L-Gaim* into his masterwork, the ambitious *Five Star Stories* (currently being serialized in the animation-based periodical *Newtype*). Although *Five Star* is directly descended from the earlier *L-Gaim*, any overlap should be taken with a grain of salt—similarities between the two shows are essentially meaningless, but nevertheless they are anything but coincidental.

Longtime Nagano fans are well acquainted with the author's fondness for staying just a step ahead of his readers. *Five Star* features a cast of thousands, a serpentine plot and Byzantine mecha designs; for this reason, a certain degree of devotion is required of its fans. Volume after volume of supplements have been released, revealing just enough to maintain the mystery but never enough to allow any reader, no matter how devoted, to imagine they've figured it all out.

Like any good creator of myth and legend, Nagano refuses to be pinned down. He's likely to change his answers depending on when (and by whom) he's asked. Continuity is revised on a regular basis and, as he has been known to say, "The latest version is the correct one."

Pentagona Then and Now

The story of *L-Gaim* takes place in the Pentagona system, which consists of a ring of five planets (and sundry other objects) orbiting the binary star system "Suns."

For centuries, the nations of Pentagona have waged war with armies of fighting mecha known as heavy metal ("HM" for short). After hundreds of years of conflict, the warrior-king Oldna Poseidal of the planet Gustgal begins to extend his conquest to other nations. With his order of [illegible]-four elite warriors, the Temple Knights, he subdues the planets of the Pentagona system one by one in a series of bloody wars.

Around the year 3975, Poseidal wins the Second Crusade, defeating his last foe, King Camon Wallha V of the planet Mizun. Camon's clan, the Yaman, are wiped out, and Camon's three-year-old son, Camon VI, is smuggled away to the planet Coam to escape Poseidal.

The first Pentagona king, Poseidal, retreats to his palace at Sveyt on Gustgal and disappears from view.

Fifteen years pass. The Temple Knights are gone, the era of the great HM legions is over, and few dare to resist the iron hand of Poseidal's government . . .

The Story of L-Gaim

The story begins with Daba Myroad and Miraouw Kyao trudging through the wilderness of Coam with the HM L-Gaim loaded onto the aptly named transport vehicle, "Works." Fanellia Amm (acting as decoy for a group of bandits) "faints" in front of the Works, prompting Kyao to set off in search of her "pursuers." The bandits begin their attack but fortunately Myroad awakens in time to fight them off.

Led by the haggard Miama Lilin, the bandits attempt several more times to ambush the Works. After the second skirmish, Myroad and Kyao obtain a voucher the bandits have re-

Planets of the Pentagona System

1 Gustgal
Poseidal's throneworld and largest planet; ringed by an asteroid belt

2 Trydetoal
Second-largest planet

3 Mizun
Home of Myroad's Yaman clan

4 Coam
Location of Amandara Concern

5 Fa
No atmosphere; hence, uninhabited

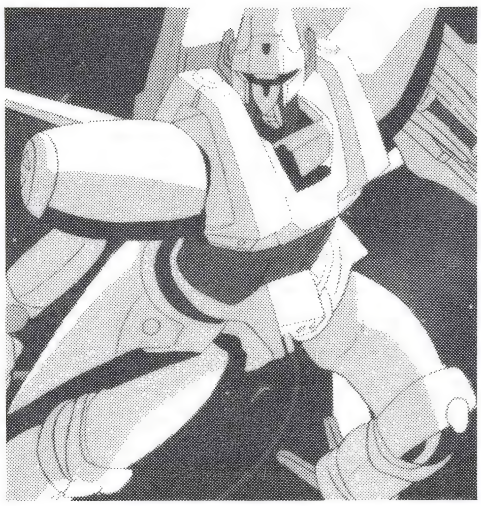
Other Orbiting Objects

6 Palartha Star
A mining asteroid

7 Metta
Gwaza Rowan's asteroid base

8 Asteroid Belt
Between Fa and Gustgal

9 Searte Star
Full Flat's colony, hidden in asteroid belt



ceived in return for the as yet uncompleted hijacking. With Amm in tow, Myroad and Kyao head into town to track down the credit note's owner (the businessman Amandara Khamandara) to find out why he has hired Lilin's men to steal the L-Gaim.

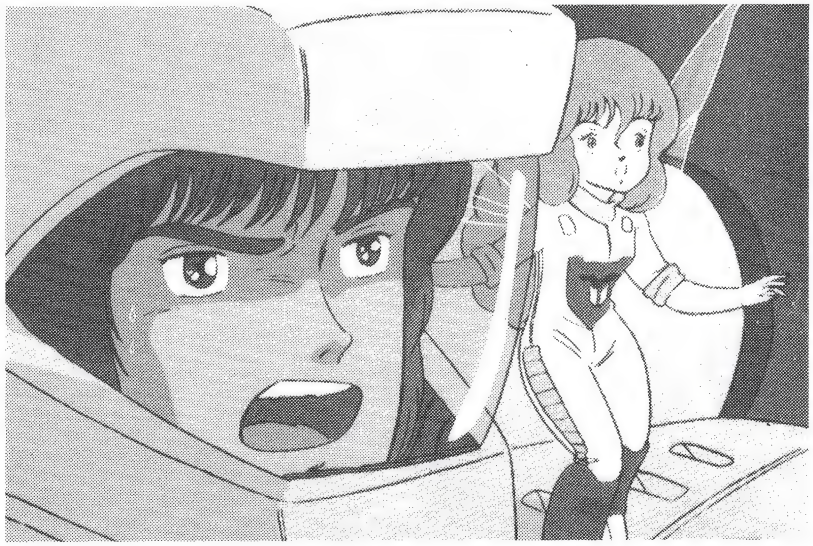
The attempt to find Amandara is unsuccessful. Myroad, Kyao and Amm decide to do some hijacking of their own and steal a spaceship in order to travel to Mizun, where Amandara is presently conducting business. After kidnapping Gaw Ha Leccee to pilot the ship they arrive on Mizun with Gavlet Gablae in hot pursuit and are rescued from a waiting Poseidal army attack by Stella Covan's rebels.

After visiting the ruins of the Yaman clan's city, Myroad and company finally meet Amandara Khamandara, sponsor of Stella's rebels. Myroad rejects Amandara's offer of a reward for the return of the credit note and promptly leaves.

The group is soon joined by Leccee (who defects partly because of ethical reasons and partly because of an attraction to Myroad) and subsequently embarks upon a series of missions with Stella's rebels attacking Poseidal army bases. During one such sortie, Myroad first confronts "Lady Poseidal," albeit in hologram form.

Finally, Poseidal's forces attack Stella's base at Little Saye, killing Stella and forcing Myroad's group to escape into space. Amm, who has been fighting constantly with Leccee (largely over Myroad), elects to stay behind.

Myroad and friends pass through the asteroid belt, visit Searte Star and meet Full Flat. Leccee's bad humor as well as an assassin of the Poseidal army oblige them to make an early end to the visit.



Running out of options, the group stages a suicidal assault on Sveyt, Poseidal's capital. From Mizun, Amm rejoins the group accompanied by a fully crewed ship supplied by Amandara. With renewed hope, the group sets off for Trydetoal.

En route, they fend off a mutiny attempt (Hasshia Mosshia, once one of Miama Lilin's bandits and now one of Amm's crew members, attempts to turn them in for the reward money), and encounter Quazan Olibee, now a creature of Poseidal. Of course, they are doggedly pursued by Gablae's ship, the *Sllenderscala*.

On Trydetoal, Myroad survives an assassination attempt by Miama Asphii, Miama Lilin's vengeance-crazed daughter. Soon after, Myroad is taken ill and a doctor's betrayal leads to his capture by Gablae. When Kyao and the others rescue him, they get away with a bonus: they capture not only the superadvanced new HM Amonduul Stack, but also its designer, Mesh Maker, who helps modify the Stack into the L-Gaim Mk-II.

Shortly afterward, Myroad meets Semujh Shato, a Trydetoal rebel leader. After fending off Gwaza Rowau, Nei Moh Han and Gablae several times, Myroad and Semujh form an alliance. The new resistance group sets off to Mizun to continue uniting the rebel factions, but there is one person missing: Leccee, frustrated and unhappy, leaves Myroad's group and joins Amandara Khamandara's private army.

En route to Mizun, Myroad encounters Amandara once more. Distrusting the "Death Merchant's" motives, Myroad shows him his Yaman clan pendant and swears to overthrow Poseidal. Arriving on Mizun, he kisses the ground, paying homage to his ancestors.

From here on, Myroad, Semujh and their followers clash repeatedly with Poseidal's army, first on Mizun and then in space. To counter their growing strength, Lady Poseidal deploys not only most of her "Thirteen Men" but also her ultimate weapon against Myroad, his old flame Olibee.

Meanwhile, Myroad returns to Searte Star only to find that Full Flat has allied with the ambitious Gwaza Rowau. The rebels escape Full's treachery and Gwaza's forces, but the final shock is yet to come . . . the loyal Semujh has all along been a spy for Full Flat! Nonetheless, Myroad considers his comrade indispensable and decides to forgive him.

When Gablae and Quazan Olibee are paired up, Gablae develops a fierce, unrequited love for the blonde biosoldier. Full Flat confronts Amandara, hinting at a mysterious relationship between them.

Gwaza Rowau turns on Lady Poseidal, establishing his own faction; when his lover, Nei Moh Han, defends Poseidal, he kills her in cold blood. In short order, he (with Gablae and most of the Thirteen Men following him) kidnaps Olibee and her assistant/controller, Rockley Ron.

The climax of the story takes place as the different rebel and army factions fight in and over Sveyt. Myroad and Semujh's rebels begin their bombardment of Sveyt with asteroids from Gustgal's asteroid belt prior to their full-scale assault. They clash with Gwaza and Full Flat's fleet; Myroad boards Gwaza's flagship and, with Gablae's help, rescues Olibee.

Full Flat enters the fray, fighting her way in to confront Mian/"Lady Poseidal" and free her from Poseidal's control by destroying the biorelation machinery. She tries to remind Mian of their past, and of her own identity, but Mian stubbornly insists that she is Poseidal. "You gave yourself body and soul to him," says Flat, "you became a doll . . . and he became Amandara Khamandara."

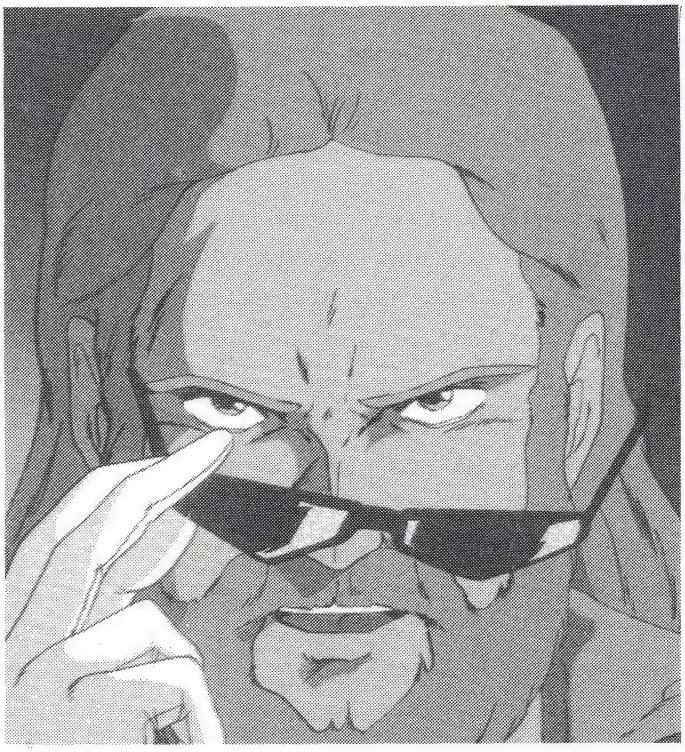
Unfortunately, they are interrupted by Myroad; an explosion topples his L-Gaim Mk-II and Flat is crushed. Mian flees, only to be accosted by Amandara, who is now revealed to be the true Oldna Poseidal. He tells her to use her remaining biorelation power to defend Sveyt; Mian refuses, again insisting that she is Poseidal, and escapes.

Meanwhile, Myroad is using Olibee and her connection to the biorelation system to locate Mian. Mian's mental turmoil and the damage to the biorelation machinery itself, however, are taking a heavy toll on the biosoldier's mind; Olibee is dazed, almost childlike.

Amandara again finds Mian, telling her to release the biorelation power. She now recognizes him as Poseidal: "You're hiding out in this disguise, using the biorelation power to stay young." In the voice of Full Flat, she tells him that he is no longer Poseidal, just Amandara; Poseidal of the Temple Knights would never have become a dictator, or used a woman as a puppet while he sat back and watched.

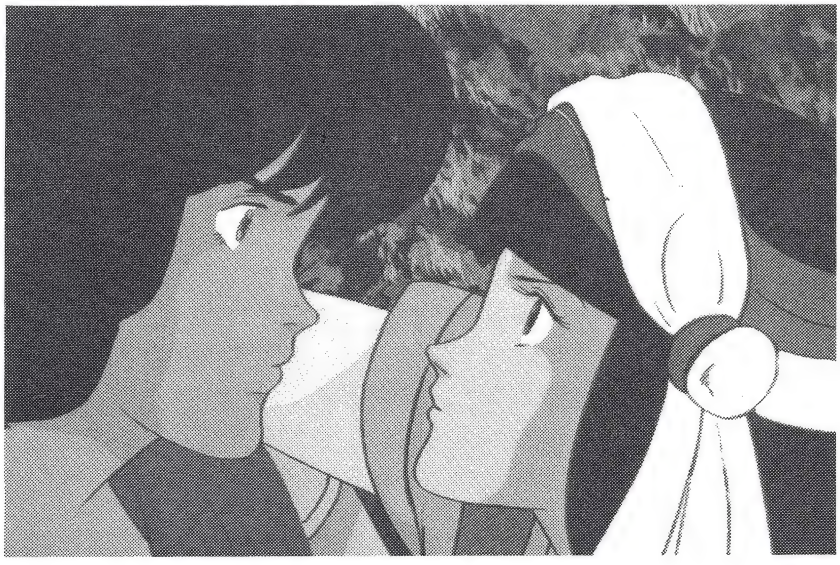
"But," he protests, "you understood the reasons for it!"

First Myroad and then Mian's guards arrive, and Amandara flees to find his personal HM, the Original Auge. While Gwaza prepares to send his asteroid fortress Metta crashing down on Sveyt, Amm, who is returning Olibee to safety, is ambushed by Gablae. She gives Olibee to him in return for his promise to go to Myroad's aid.



Amandara reaches the Auge. Gorged with biorelation energy, power siphoned from the life-energy of Pentagona's inhabitants, he confronts Myroad in his full glory as Oldna Poseidal. In the heart of Sveyt, his power source, he is virtually invincible; vowing to end the Yaman bloodline once and for all, he overpowers the Mk-II and moves in for the kill.

Leccee, meanwhile, has followed Mian to Poseidal's Lachesis shrine, where she finds her sprawled on the steps, too weak to move. Mian tells her to help her to the shrine's seat so that she can stop Poseidal and save them all from Gwaza's descending asteroid.



As the Auge and the Mk-II lunge at each other a final time, Mian shuts off the biorelation power and Poseidal is struck a fatal blow. Gablae arrives in time to save Myroad from Poseidal's dying attack and, as Mian crumbles into dust, the whole of Sveyt begins to rise into the air. The asteroid Metta, missing the floating city, plows into the ocean.

Gwaza, realizing that levitating Sveyt used up the last of the biorelation power, moves his fleet in for a final assault. Myroad, announcing Poseidal's defeat, rallies the rebel forces; with the help of the *Sllenderscala*, Gwaza's fleet is routed and he is killed. The rebels, at long last, are victorious.

Later, the surviving cast gathers to bid farewell to Myroad; he is returning to Mizun with Olibee, whose mind has been irreparably damaged by the events of the last battle.

"She won't ever get better, Daba," says Gablae sadly as their ship takes off.

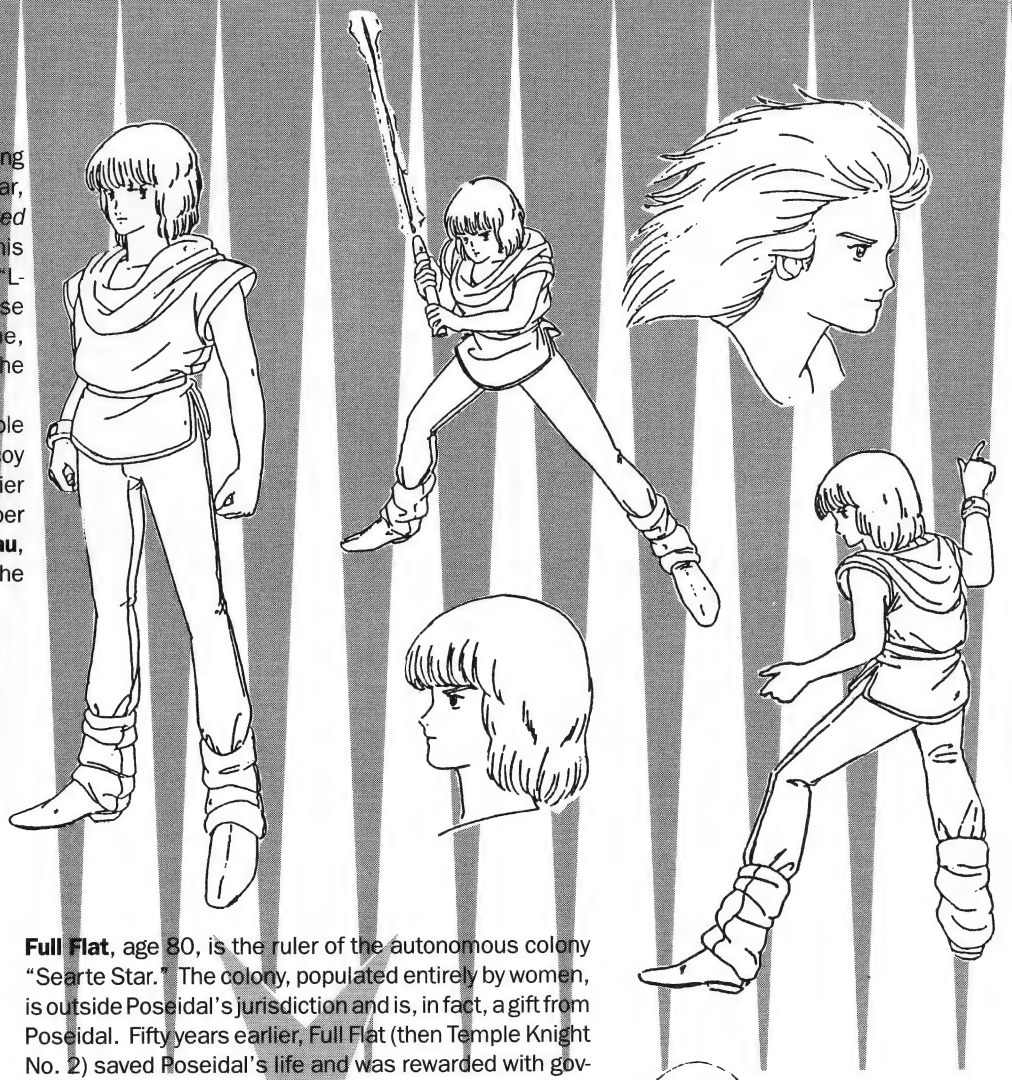
"I guess Amandara did manage to destroy all the Yaman," Leccee muses. "From now on Daba will just get old taking care of Quazan. He's become a doll."

"That was his revenge," replies Amm. "But Daba chose that path." ■

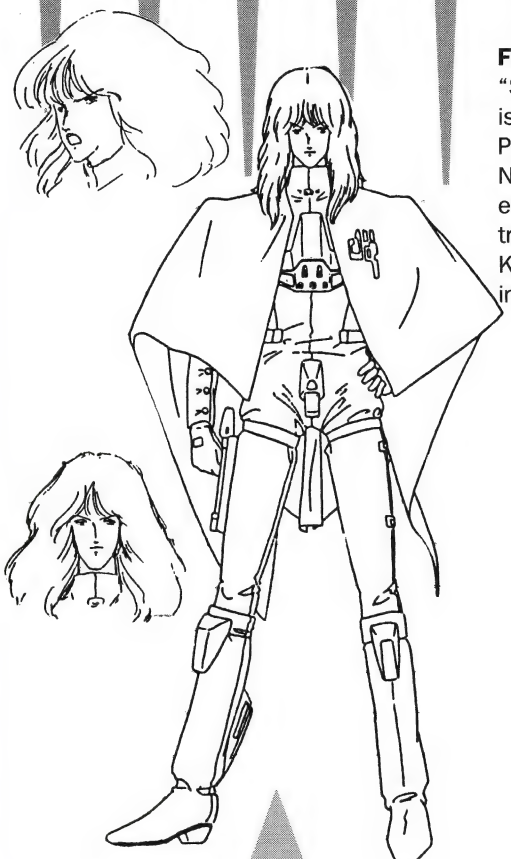
The author would like to thank Rich Arnold for his assistance in researching this article.

Daba Myroad, age 18, is the son of Mizun's King Camon V. Reared on Coam by Daba Hassar, Myroad [*as in Japanese, family name is listed first—Ed.*] sets out to seek his fortune with his childhood friend **Miraouw Kyao** and the HM "L-Gaim," a legacy from his father. In the course of the series, he reassumes his true name, Camon Myroad, and avenges his father and the clan of Yaman.

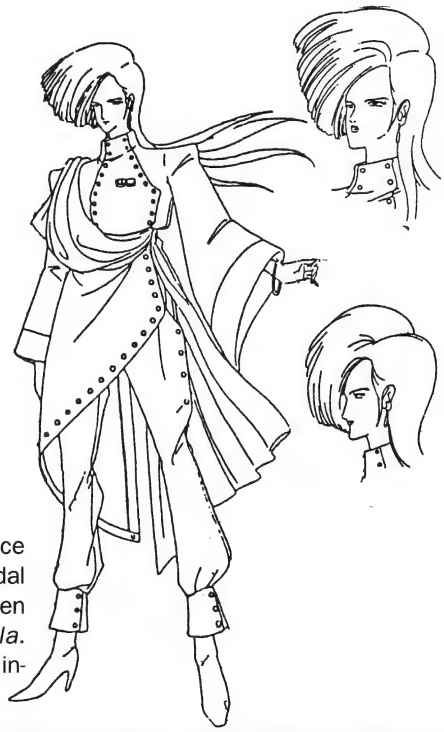
Myroad also enlists the aid of a few people he meets along the way: **Fanellia Amm**, a decoy girl for a bandit-gang; **Gaw Ha Leccee**, a soldier in the Poseidal army and an apprentice member of Poseidal's elite "Thirteen Men"; and **Lilis Fau**, a one-foot-tall fairy of obscure origin whom he finds at a sideshow on Coam.

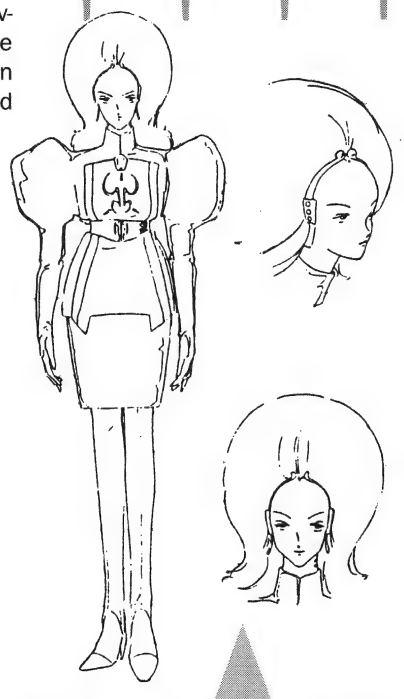


Full Flat, age 80, is the ruler of the autonomous colony "Searte Star." The colony, populated entirely by women, is outside Poseidal's jurisdiction and is, in fact, a gift from Poseidal. Fifty years earlier, Full Flat (then Temple Knight No. 2) saved Poseidal's life and was rewarded with governorship of Searte Star; unfortunately, the reward she truly sought—Poseidal's love—was given instead to Mian Ku Haw Attsher. Full is one of the few who can best Myroad in personal saber combat.



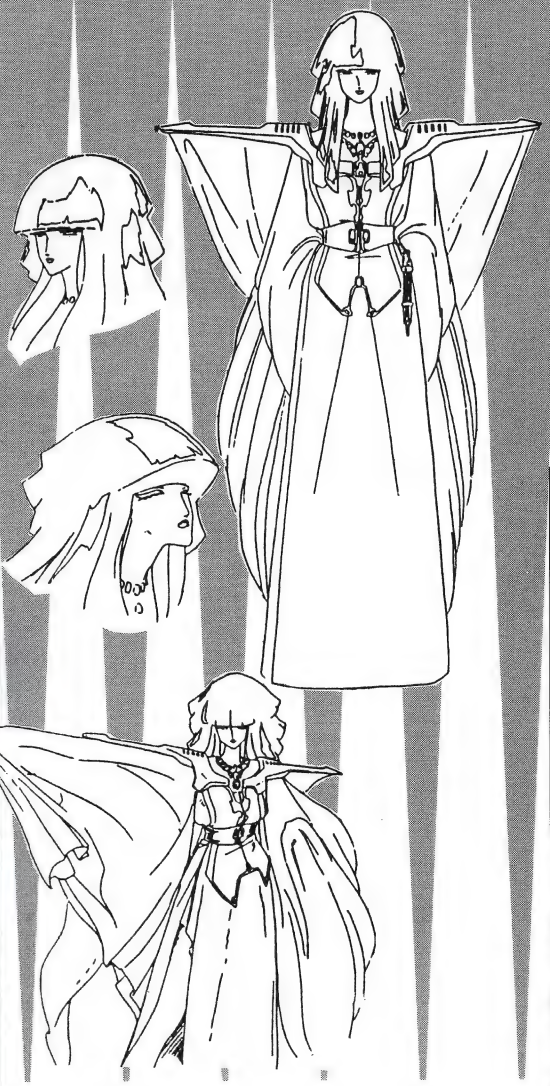
Gavlet Gablae, age 20, is a tall, lanky freelance headdliner (HM pilot) who is referred to the Poseidal army by Amandara Khamandara. He is later given command of the planet bomber *Sllenderscala*. Gablae becomes Myroad's archrival; he is also infatuated with Quazan Olibee.





Quazan Olibee, age 17, is Myroad's foster sister and one-time sweetheart. Olibee later resurfaces as a headdliner in the Poseidal army; as a biosoldier she is able to draw upon Poseidal's power, but by the same token Poseidal can gain control of her as well.

Mian Ku Haw Attsher (age 68): Fifty years ago, Mian and Full Flat were rivals for Oldna Poseidal's love. Mian, the winner, gradually became Poseidal's puppet; his personality so dominated hers that she lost all self-awareness and came to believe that she was Poseidal. Now, as "Lady Oldna Poseidal," she rules the Pentagona System in his stead, biorelation techniques both preserving her youth and enabling Poseidal to control her. Mian rarely appears in person, normally appearing as a hologram.



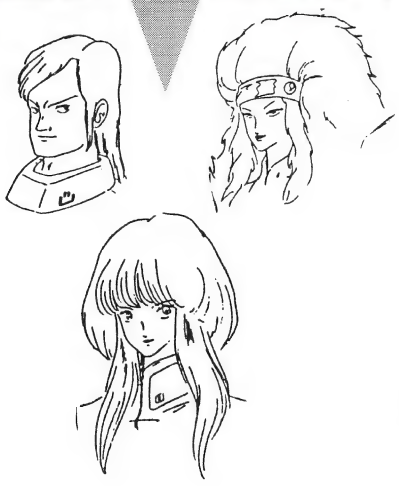
Oldna Poseidal is the legendary king of the Pentagona System, and is distinguished by his white hair, pale skin and mismatched eyes: one blue, one golden. He is also immortal, having mastery over the techniques of biorelation, which he uses to manipulate Mian Ku Haw Attsher, the puppet "Lady Poseidal." The present whereabouts of the genuine Oldna Poseidal are unknown.

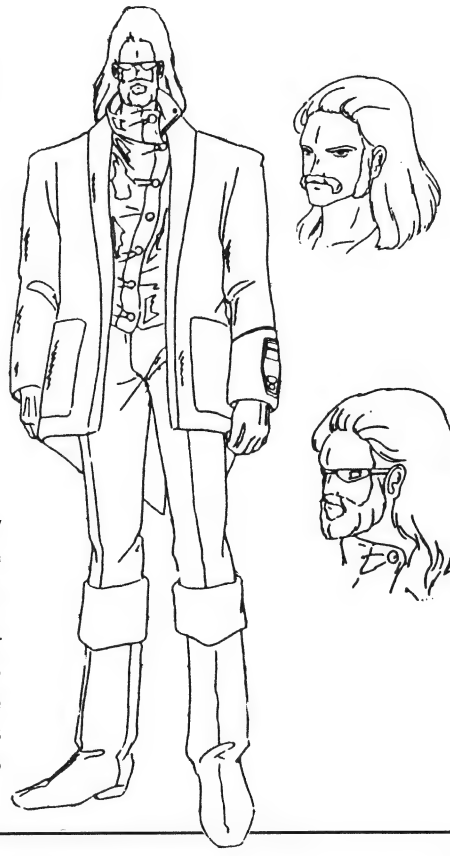
bi•o•re•la•tion (bī´ō ri lā´shən), *n.* a mysterious psionic art perfected by Poseidal [legendary king of the Pentagona System], involving the gathering and harnessing of biological energy; Poseidal's capital city of Sveyt and other locations such as Biobase "Zelda" (Cf. ***Full Metal Soldier*** OAV) are focus points for this energy, below which are batteries of processing machinery; energy can be drained from or channeled into other people; selected champions (Cf. **biosoldiers**; i.e., Quazan Olibee, Rockley Ron, Preita Quoize) are trained to receive and wield said energy; however, person supplying energy can control user's actions. Other uses of *biorelation* include prevention of aging (Cf. Poseidal, Mian, Full Flat), creation of force fields, and mind control. Largely due to *biorelation* techniques, Poseidal has been able to conquer and control the Pentagona System [BIO- + RELATION]

The "Thirteen Men" Poseidal's Elite Warriors

No. 1: Sai Quo Addar
No. 2: Preita Quoize
No. 3: Gwaza Rowau
No. 4: Nei Moh Han
No. 5: Warssan Rune
No. 6: Chai Char
No. 7: Tedd Devilas
No. 8: Maph McTomin
No. 9: Rockley Ron
No. 10: Lily Hasshi
No. 11: Baan Gania Killas
No. 12: Hans Arahart
No. 13: Mahoul Senuhmah

TRAINEE: Gaw Ha Leccee





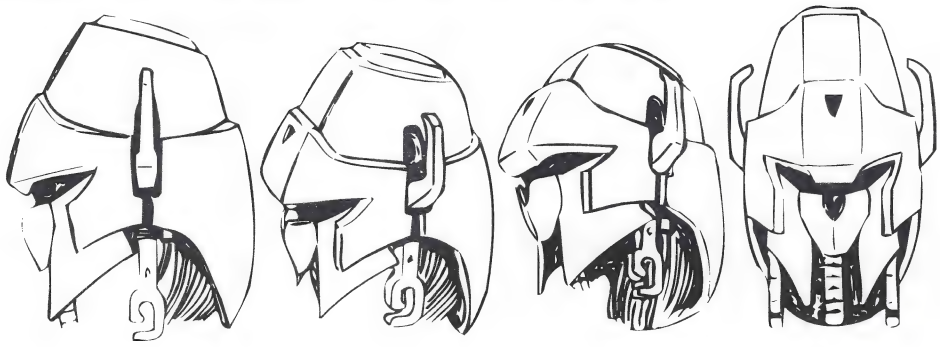
Amandara Khamandara is an incredibly wealthy businessman and the founder of the "Amandara Concern," a military supply company located on Coam. The Concern is Pentagona's largest, most profitable business; Amandara is the major supplier of the Poseidal army and is also the sponsor of a number of anti-Poseidal resistance groups. The so-called "Death Merchant" is renowned not only for his wealth but also for his talent, intelligence and charisma.

MECHA FILE

By Mark Simmons

A Continuing Series on the Mechanics and Robots of Japanese Animation

A look at one of the most prominent mecha in mecha virtuoso Mamoru Nagano's universe: the heavy metal



The mecha of *Heavy Metal L-Gaim* may, at first glance, seem strangely familiar. This reaction is quite justified; after all, not only were they created by one of the major mecha designers of *Mobile Suit Zeta Gundam,* but this artist then went on to produce the popular manga *Five Star Stories.* In fact, since both *L-Gaim* and *Five Star* are depictions of the same world—Mamoru Nagano's private universe—*L-Gaim*'s mecha, or "heavy metal," not only resemble those which populate Nagano's current manga project but are in fact often slightly redrawn versions of the same mecha. Nonetheless, the depiction of the heavy metal is significantly different from the *Five Star* mortar headd.

Suffice it to say that *F.S.S* is chronologically the prologue to *L-Gaim*, while *L-Gaim* is the earlier in Nagano's development of his private universe. But while many heavy metals have their analogues in *F.S.S.*'s mortar headds, the treatment of the machines in the story is quite different.

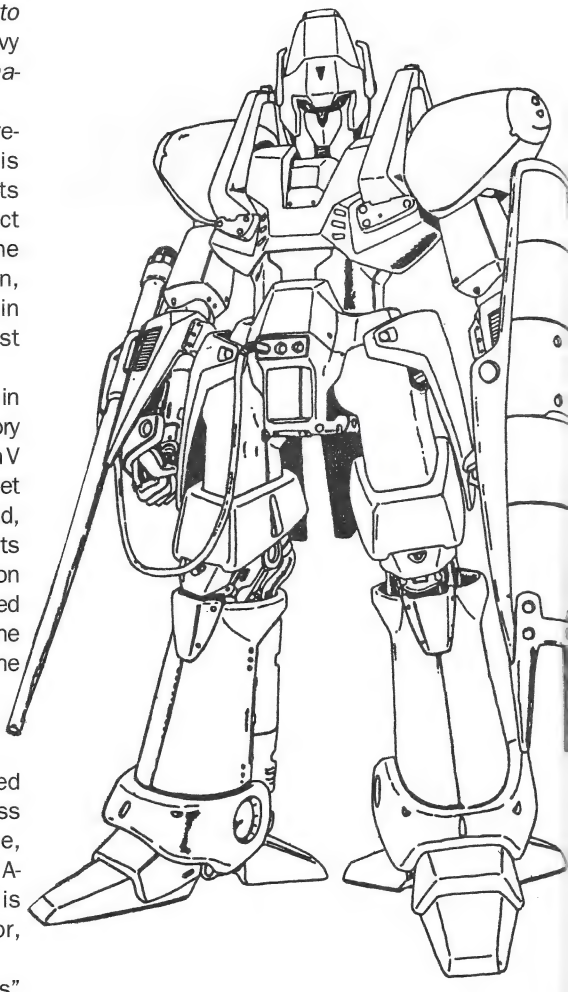
The heavy metal is not a work of art or a companion to its pilot or "headdliner"; it is first and foremost a weapon of war. The ranks of the heavy metal are divided into two categories: the B-class, cheap and expendable, and the A-class, which are heavily armed and consequently more powerful. There are now literally thousands of B-class machines and their numerous variants, not to mention the lowly "machinery" units, which do not even rank as true heavy metals. But the A-class heavy metal is a relic of a sort, as it has been years since one was last constructed, and less than a hundred still exist . . .

History and Development of the L-Gaim

[CAVEAT: Because this is a survey of heavy metal history and not a primer on the history of Nagano's universe, readers are encouraged to refer to the animated television series Heavy Metal L-Gaim *for further background information.—Ed.]*

The heavy metal L-Gaim is a good representative of the A-class HM. But while it is typical in its construction and armament, its pedigree is quite unique: the L-Gaim is in fact a customized Gayrahm. This heavy metal, the soldier HM of the planet Mizun's Yaman clan, was one of the titans of Pentagona's past; in two great wars, the Gayrahms took on the best of Poseidal's forces.

When Poseidal's army crushed the Yaman in the "second crusade," fifteen years before the story of *L-Gaim* takes place, the defeated King Camon V sent one Gayrahm with his infant son to the planet Coam. The man to whom he entrusted his child, Daba Hassar, modified the heavy metal into its present form. In turn, Stella Covan's rebel army on Mizun later built a line of B-class heavy metals based on the L-Gaim. In a sense, through the L-Gaim the Mizun legacy thus comes full circle . . . from the Gayrahm to the D-Sseerd.



Construction

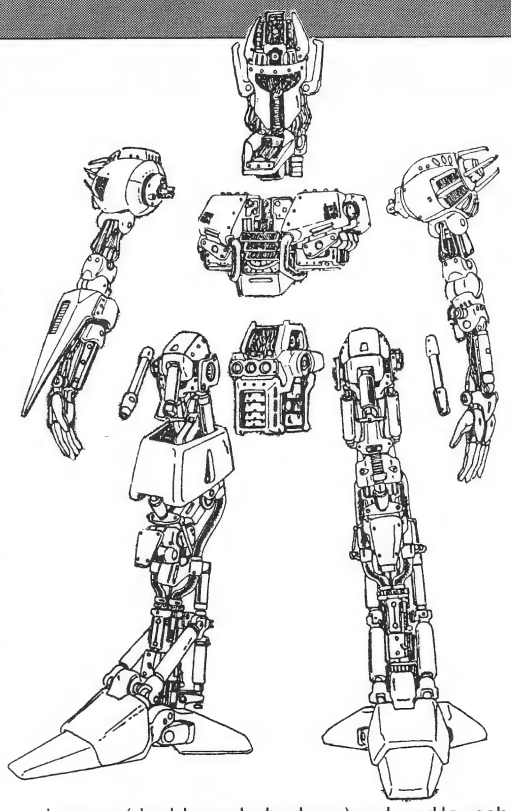
The basis of any heavy metal is the articulated skeleton known as the "movable frame." A-class frames come in three sizes: "S" (for example, the G-Roon); "M" (L-Gaim, Bat-Shu, Auge and A-Toll); and "L" (the Temple series). Power is provided by a high-output electric generator, backed up by solar energy.

The frame is also equipped with "flosser units" located in the legs. Flossers are air-compression thrusters which allow the heavy metal to hover

several meters off the ground and travel at speeds up to about 150 km/h. For true flight, however, the L-Gaim requires a booster backpack (a light booster for atmosphere or spiral booster for space flight), or a land booster (a high-performance fighter capable of carrying a heavy metal).

The L-Gaim has 5.8 tons of armor loaded onto its movable frame. This includes the large plates which are attached to the hips and shoulders of most A-class heavy metal. The armor is fairly durable and has some limited laser absorption and deflection capability. The hands of an A-class heavy metal also have a laser-resistant rubber coating that allows it to actually grasp the blade of an attacker's laser saber.

Finally, the L-Gaim's cockpit consists of a small hover-vehicle, the flosser spiral flow "Flicker" (any hover-vehicle is called a flosser, and the designation "spiral flow" indicates that the Flicker can also fly in space). The Flicker slots into the heavy metal's chest just under the head. Most other A-class heavy metal have only a floating chair, or flosser seat, on which the pilot rides into the heavy metal's cockpit through a hatch at the base of its neck.



Equipment

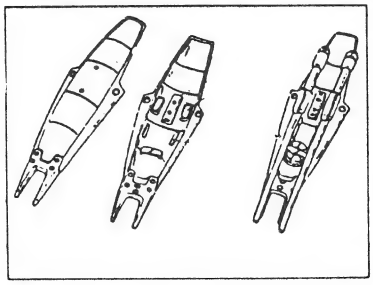
The primary armament of the L-Gaim and of all heavy metals is the power launcher, a large laser gun powered by the heavy metal's generator (to which it is connected by a cable that plugs into the heavy metal's waist; the L-Gaim has sockets for three such plugs). The L-Gaim can carry one power launcher on each arm.

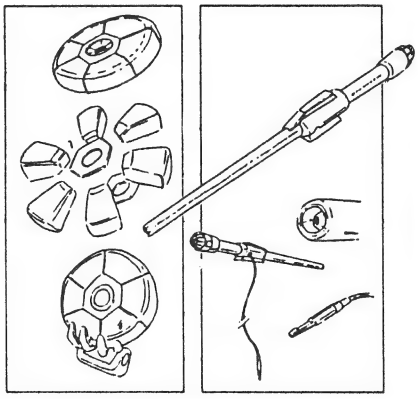
For close combat, the heavy metal uses laser sabers, stored in special racks where it can recharge via a generator. The L-Gaim has a saber rack in each wrist, which can hold normal sabers, lancers (double-ended sabers), or hand launchers (small power launchers) interchangeably.

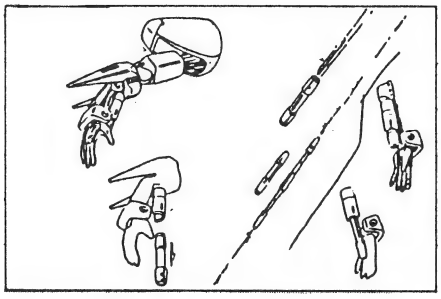
The L-Gaim also carries a special shield known as a "binder." Binders are armor plates covered with solar and laser absorption panels, allowing them to turn a direct hit into extra energy (however, if overloaded, the binder may explode!). They also may have weapon mounts or built-in armament. The L-Gaim's binder has mounts for two power launchers, two sabers and two S-mines (disc-shaped fragmentation grenades), and can be attached to its arm on a standard power-launcher mount.

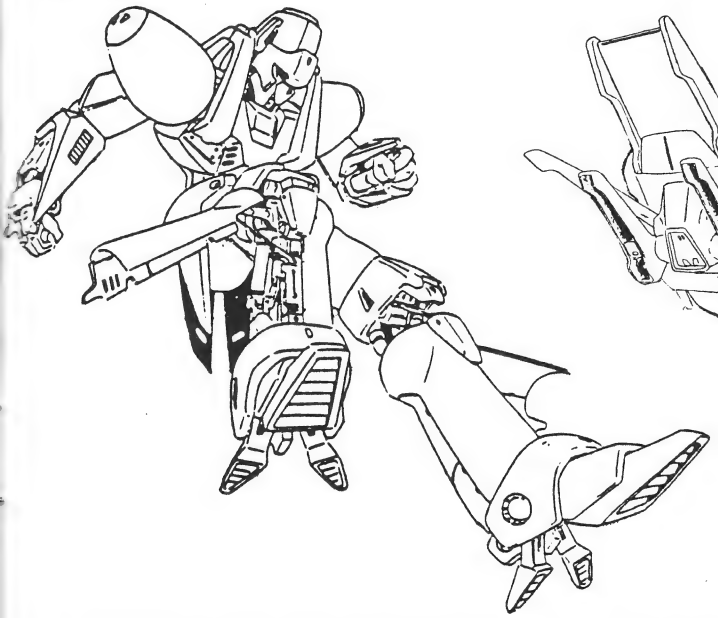
Finally, the A-class heavy metal has a special weapon option: it has enough power to wield a buster launcher—a huge laser cannon and ultimate weapon of the Pentagona system. This weapon requires three power-launcher sockets, and must be wielded with caution lest its vast power overload the heavy metal's power system and destroy it.

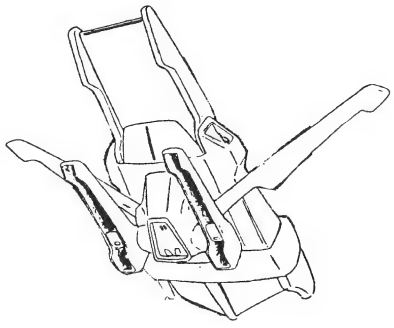
This, then, is the heavy metal L-Gaim. The last of a vanished line, it ranks as but average among the top class of Pentagona's fighting machines. In the hands of a true warrior, however, it may be enough. ■

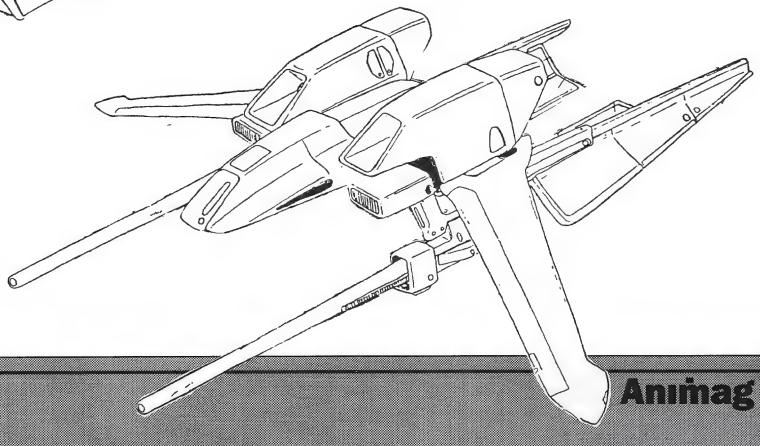












MECHA FILE

Notes on HM Lineage

Heavy metals have been used as weapons of war in the Pentagona system for generations. The heavy metal of today, however, is generally inferior to its ancestors; even the best, the A-class heavy metal, is largely an imitation of the famous war machines of Pentagona's glorious past. In fact, those used by Poseidal's warrior elite are all duplicates of heavy metal from the days before his unification of the Pentagona system; these replicas were built and restored by Poseidal himself.

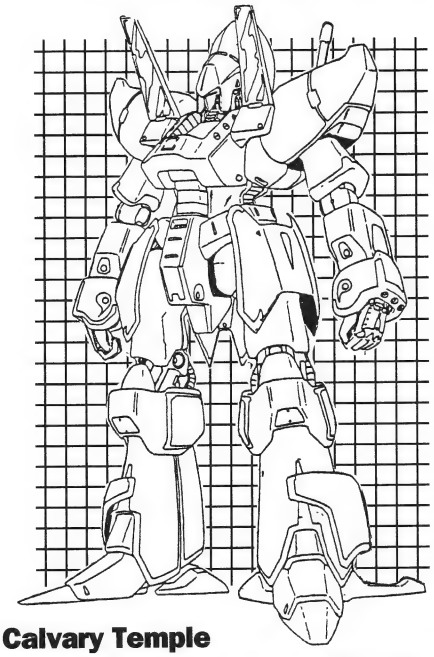
The best of these are the replicas of the Temple series. The original Temple line all originated from the Blood Temple (essentially identical to *F.S.S.*'s Led Mirage); from it developed the Original Auge and the rest of the Temple series (Ashura, Calvary, Destiny and Emper—all built in Poseidal's palace, the flying island, Float Temple). There were 24 B-Temples, one for each of Poseidal's elite Temple Knights, but only one each of the other Temple series heavy metal.

After his conquest of the Pentagona system, in which all these famous heavy metal were destroyed, Poseidal paid homage to them with his replicas: four A-Temples, one C-Temple, one Auge replica and ten G-Roons (in imitation of the Emper Temple). He also built ten replicas of the Bat-Shu, a long-extinct heavy metal from the planet Coam.

Other than the Original Auge, the only heavy metal of this ancient era which still survives is Full Flat's private collection of Gayrahms and Daba Myroad's L-Gaim (a customized Gayrahm).

The B-class heavy metal, in turn, developed from the A-class; the first of these mass-production heavy metals was the Bal-Bud, a cheaper version of the Bat-Shu. Successive downgrades yielded the Greiia and the Allone, which represent the nadir of heavy metal evolution.

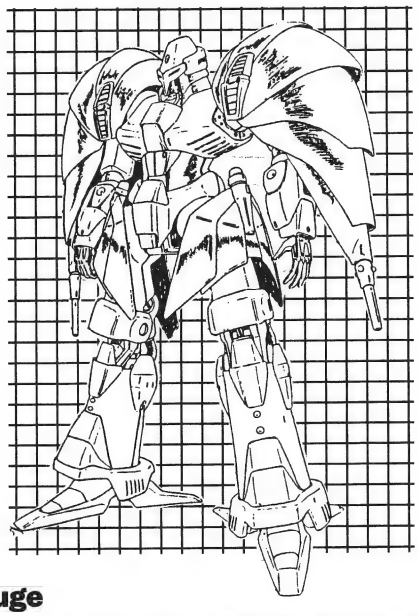
Similarly, Stella Covan's rebel army modeled the mass-production heavy metal D-Sseerd on Myroad's L-Gaim. Ironically, this B-class heavy metal was the base for the arms merchant Amandara's Novel D-Sseerd, the prototype of the transforming heavy metal Amonduul Stack, which was then modified into the L-Gaim Mk-II.



Calvary Temple

Replica HM with unique asymmetrical "face." Equipped with Auge's super flossers, has laser deflection plates on chest, good performance and armament.

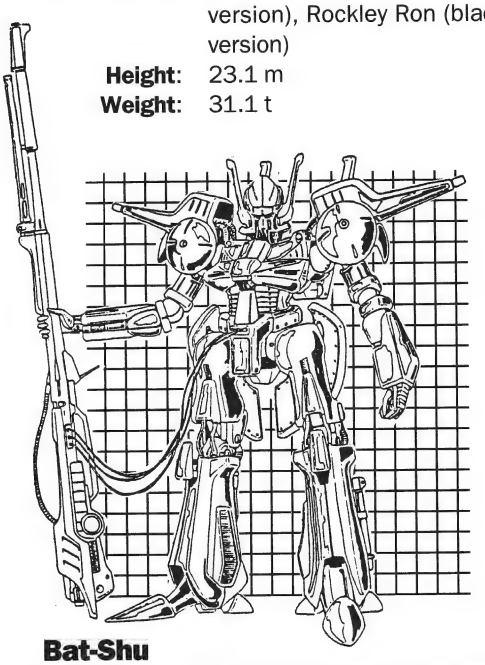
Headdliners: Quazan Olibee (gold "Helmine" version), Rockley Ron (black version)
Height: 23.1 m
Weight: 31.1 t



Auge

Replica Auge with "super flossers" allowing space and atmospheric flight, solid gold "round binders," and an energy-absorbing force field. Can bombard enemies with many small sabers ("throw lancers") launched from round binders.

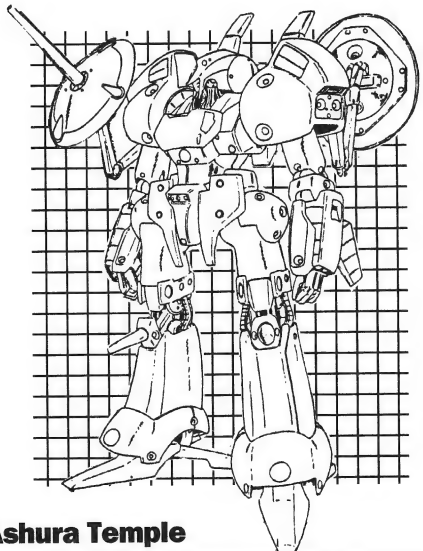
Headdliner: Nei Moh Han
Height: 20.0-22.0 m
Weight: 23.1 t



Bat-Shu

Commonly used by Poseidal's elite headdliners. Versatile HM with oversized sabers, energy bomber unit (paralyses enemy HM), S-mines, missiles, etc., plus buster launcher option.

Headdliners: Gavlet Gablae, Heckler Mauser and Anton Rando (Nei's wingmen)
Height: 20.5-21.2 m
Weight: 20.0 t



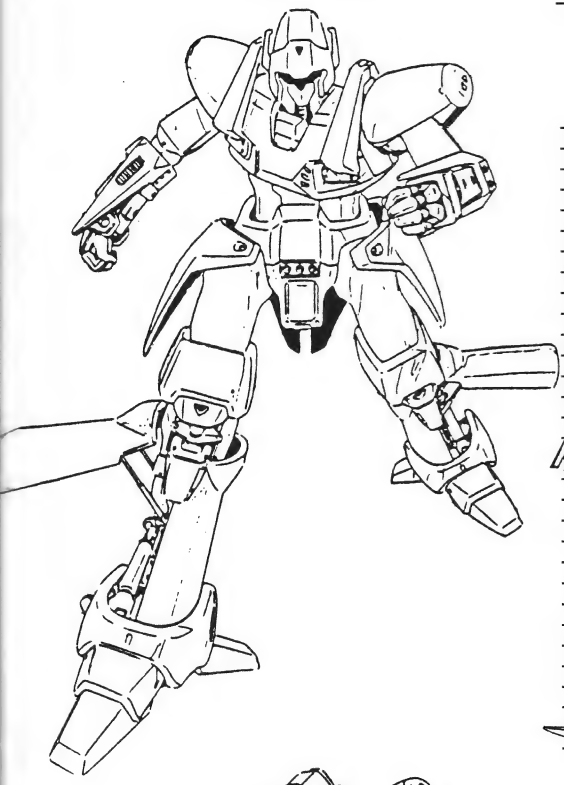
Ashura Temple

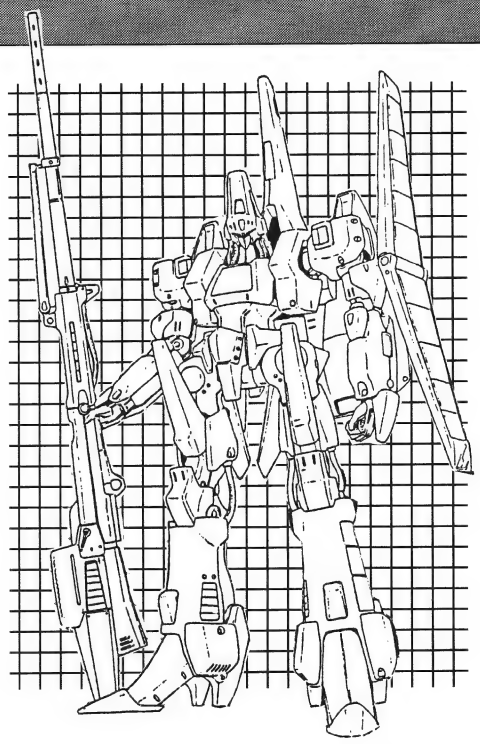
Heavy HM with high firepower; has two supplementary arms, which hold "circus binders." Can thus use four power launchers; also has energy bombers, etc. Currently four (replica) A-Temples in use.

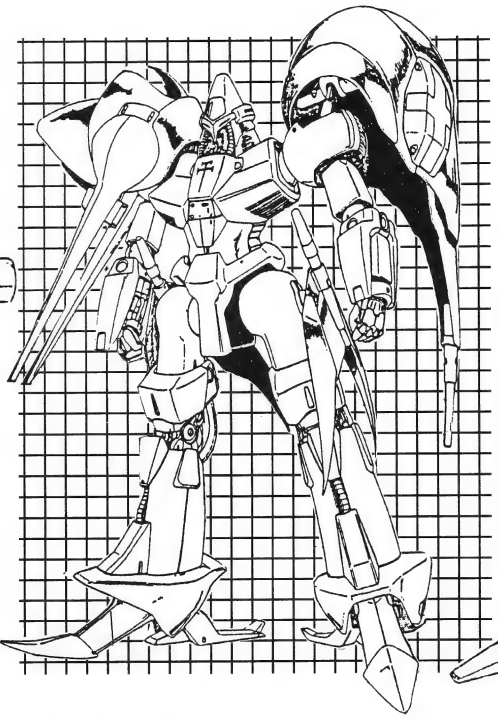
Headdliners: Gavlet Gablae, Baan Gania Killas
Height: 22.0-24.0 m
Weight: 39.7 t

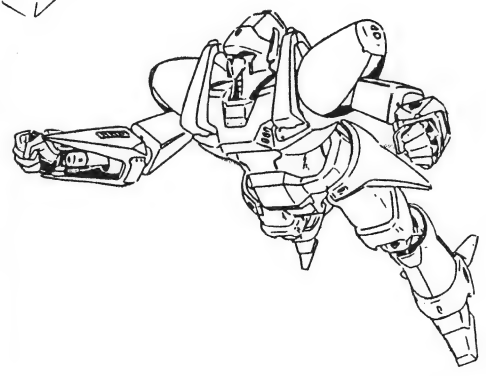
L-Gaim Specifications

Height	20.7 meters	
Body Weight	19.1 tons	
Movable Frame	Type M	12.5t
	Oil, etc.	0.8 t
	Armor	5.8 t
Power Plant	Electric generator + solar energy	
Max. Output	200,000 HP	
Power Sockets	Three	
Hovering Speed	150 km/hour	
Combat Weight	31.1 tons	
Cockpit System	Flosser spiral flow	
	"Flicker"	0.5 t
Armament	P-Launcher x 2	4.2t
	Binder x 1	2.7 t
	S-Mine x 2	1.6 t
	Saber x 1	0.9 t
	Lancer x 1	0.9 t
	Handlauncher	1.2t









Original Auge

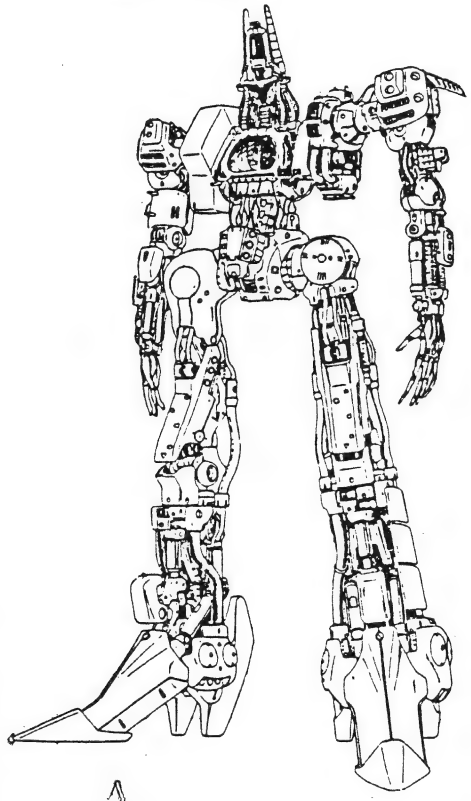
Ancestor of Auge, Pagortha, etc. Has round-binders and force field, and armament includes large scythe and hand-launcher racks similar to Auge's throw-lancer bombardment. In Sveyt, can draw on extra power when in contact with the ground.

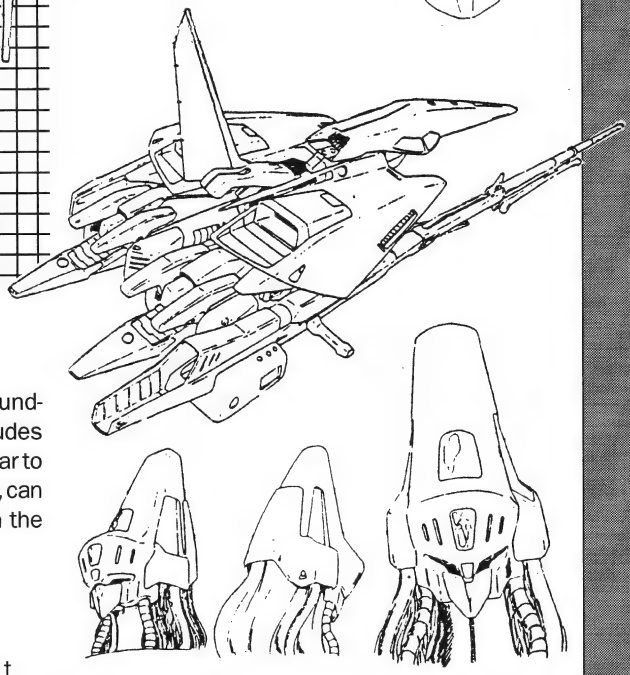
Headdliner:	Oldna Poseidal	
Height:	20.0 m	
Weight:	29.9 t	
Armament	H-Launcher x 1	1.2 t

L-Gaim Mk-II

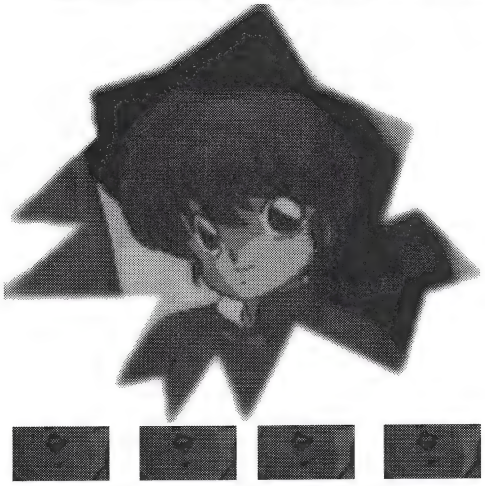
Remodeled version of the Amonduul Stack. Transforms into "Prowler" mode; high-power, high-speed and heavily armed (can carry up to 12 power launchers!). Equipped with 360-degree cockpit monitor screen, flosser spiral flow "Viewy."

Headdliner:	Daba Myroad
Height:	22.3-26.5 m
Weight:	36.8 t





FANDOM INTERFACE



"How can I meet other anime fans?" is a perennial question. ANIMAG is now compiling a list of anime groups. The first list will appear in our next issue. Anime fan groups are invited to send us information about themselves if they wish to be included in it.

There seem to be several types of groups: (1) anime clubs which usually meet monthly to hold video screenings, and which may publish a newsletter or fanzine; (2) anime bulletin board systems for computer networks; (3) anime amateur press associations, for fans who like to write and draw amateur manga and exchange information on their favorite anime series or characters; (4) anime correspondence clubs, for fans who are looking for pen pals. Many of these groups are created and disappear after only a few months, so lists are constantly changing.

Right now, we don't know how much room we'll be able to allow for this column from issue to issue, so we don't know how much space we can give to each group. The basic information should include the name of each group, the nature of its activity, and its address (or the address of a contact person) so that those who are interested may write for further details. More information will be appreciated; if we have room, we'll print it. The deadline to submit information for the next ANIMAG is May 31, 1991. Send all information to:

Fred Patten
c/o ANIMAG
P.O. Box 31492
San Francisco, CA 94131

We look forward to hearing from you.

ANIMAG
ANIMAG
ANIMAG
ANIMAG
ANIMAG
ANIMAG
ANIMAG
If you missed these issues... maybe you should subscribe!
ANIMAG OFFERS:
Animation news and articles on Japanese animated films, TV shows and videos.
Interviews with people within the animation industry.
Features and columns on popular Japanese manga.
Articles on animation-related merchandise.
A regular modeling column focusing on the new wave of animation-related model kits.

THE FOOLS!! NO-ONE BEATS OUR SELECTION!! YOU CAN'T OUTDISTANCE US!
COMIC RELIEF
FIRE!
HEH...HEH! SO MUCH FOR THE COMPETITION!
KABLOOEY!
B.WOODWARD — TIP OF THE PEN TO SHINTANI

Come choose from the Bay Area's *Largest* selection of • New Comics and Back Issues • Golden Age, Silver Age and Collectable Comics • Graphic Novels • Japanese Animation • Underground and Small Press Comix • Posters • T-shirts • Videos • Comic Storage and Preservation Supplies • Movie and TV Books and Magazines • Calvin and Hobbes, Bloom County, Doonesbury, Far Side, etc. • Buttons and Greeting Cards • Experienced and Friendly Staff

buy • sell • trade

FULL SERVICE MAIL ORDER AVAILABLE!

Dependable! • Quick Service! • Inexpensive!

☆ ***SEND US YOUR WANT LIST*** ☆

LARGE SELECTION OF JAPANESE COMICS AND BOOKS!

Send inquiries to "**Dept. A**"

COMIC RELIEF

Comic Relief
2138 University Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94704
(415) 843-5002 new comics hotline: (415) 843-1530

We love hearing from our readers, but...

Here are a few guidelines to keep in mind when writing to us. Please note that we have a new post office box. Send all correspondence (except subscription requests) to:

ANIMAG
P.O. Box 31492
San Francisco, CA 94131

INCLUDE AN SASE (Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope): We cannot emphasize this point enough. Business-sized envelopes only, please.

WRITER/ARTIST GUIDELINES: We can supply guidelines for submissions only if you include an SASE. Unsolicited manuscripts and artwork cannot be returned without an appropriate self-addressed, stamped envelope with sufficient postage affixed. Articles should be addressed to Trish Ledoux, Editor; artwork to Tony Del Grosso, Art Director.

FORMAT: Unsolicited articles will be read only if they are typed double-spaced. We cannot accept handwritten or illegible manuscripts. If you do not include a SASE, we will assume you do not wish to have your manuscript returned.

LETTERS TO ANIMAG: We will personally answer your questions on Japanese animation and related topics if you include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. We're sorry, but we're unable to fulfill requests for personal services such as artwork, detailed information, introductions or translations. Send your letters to Dana Fong, Fan Correspondence. Unless you specifically request otherwise, we will print those letters of most interest to our readers.

ARTWORK: Before you send us your submission, please request a copy of our Artist's Guidelines. (We will not review submissions on binder paper or in pencil, for example.) We are interested in original artwork only. Please do not send us your version of, for example, the latest cover of *Newtype*. If you send unsolicited work, keep the original and *send us a copy!*

SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS: Do not send requests for subscriptions to the ANIMAG editorial address. Subscriptions (and subscriptions only) should be sent to: ANIMAG
P.O. Box 23651
Oakland, CA 94623

Have you ever wanted to go

Far & Away... ??

Voyage with us

Far into

...the realm of the barely possible
...the future of the human & other races
...new worlds of imagination

&

Away from

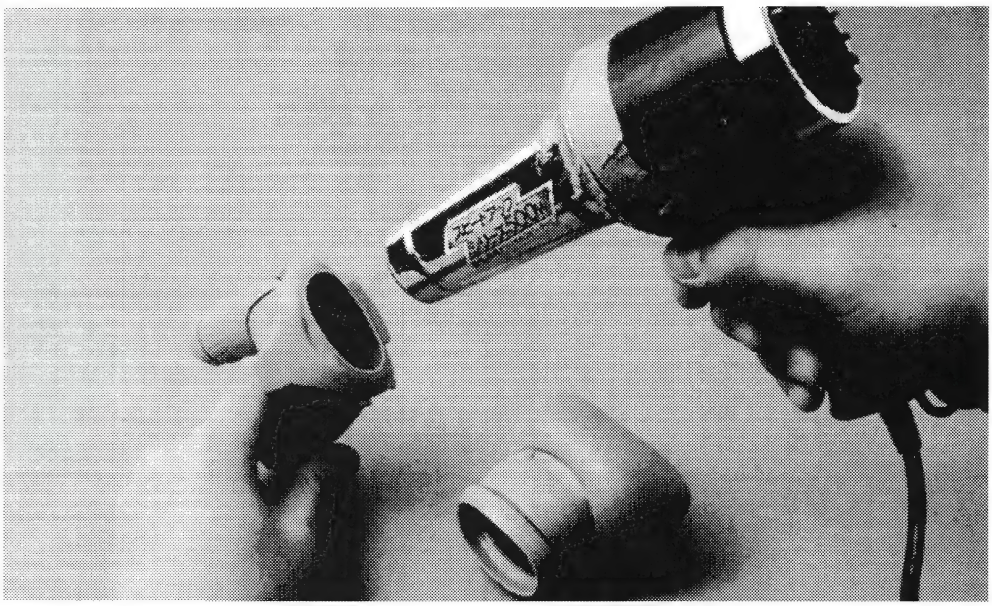
...Known Space
...Known limits
...Our humdrum time & place...

Far & Away * $ 5.00 US * Reserve a copy today at your favorite game or comic store or write to:
Pacific Rim Publishing Company
PO Box 23651
Oakland, CA 94623
Subscriptions: 6 issues $24.00 US, 12 issues $48.00 US
Canadian Subscriptions Please Contact:
The Sentry Box: 2047 — 34th Avenue SW, Calgary AB T2T 2C4
Other Countries: 6 issues $36.00 US, 12 issues $66.00 US

ANIMATED PLASTIC

By Tony Del Grosso

Building Your First Vinyl Kit



Use a hair dryer to soften parts

In earlier issues of ANIMAG, we discussed building resin model kits. Now we turn our attention to another kind of kit.

The soft vinyl, or "*sofuto-bini*," kits are the most recent product of the garage-kit craze in Japan. While the first vinyl kit hit the market in 1983, it wasn't until 1986 that the process really became popular and model companies began producing entire lines of soft vinyl models.

The first vinyl kits, from Billikens, were based on the monsters from American sf films such as *This Island Earth*. Then Max Factory began producing kits based on popular animated shows such as *Mazinger Z* and *Aura Battler Dunbine*. Soon, industry giants such as Kaiyodo and Volks began producing their own lines of soft vinyl kits, providing lighter, cheaper and bigger kits for the fan market.

While resin kits are more durable and solid, vinyl kits combine poseability with ease of construction. Their light, hollow parts can often be placed in a variety of positions, allowing the modeler to choose favorite poses. Arms and legs can be left unglued for even greater poseability. Since vinyl kits use less material to make than resin kits, they are much cheaper—in Japan, you can buy almost three vinyl kits for the cost of a single resin model.

Building Your Soft Vinyl Kit

You'll need:

- A hair drier to heat and cool parts
- A hobby knife to trim flash and carve out air bubbles
- Green putty and epoxy putty to fill in air bubbles
- CA glue to attach parts
- Plaster to balance the kit (optional)

Cleaning

First, take your kit out of the box and make sure you have all the parts and the instructions.

Vinyl kit pieces tend to warp because they are hollow and made of thin, soft plastic. Fortunately, any flaws can easily be repaired. Immerse warped parts in hot, *not* boiling, water (extreme heat will destroy the kit). The sink is ideal for this purpose. After five to seven minutes the plastic should return to its original shape.

Check the pieces. If they haven't sprung back into shape, mold them gently with your fingers until you're satisfied. Immerse in cold water to harden and set the shape.

Beginners may want to use a hair drier rather than hot water to heat and soften the plastic since there is less risk of melting the

materials. Set driers on high. The unheated setting available on some driers is also helpful for cooling the plastic. In fact, every vinyl-kit modeler should have a hair drier on hand since it makes both preparing and assembling the kit faster and easier.

Next, you'll need to clean your kit to remove any oil left over from the molding process. Scrub all parts gently with an old toothbrush dipped in dishwashing liquid. Rinse in cool water and dry with a paper towel or soft cloth. Make sure kits are completely dry (including inside hollow parts) before beginning construction.

Cutting

Now you can prepare to build your kit. Before you do anything else, wash your hands to make sure that no oil or dirt gets on the kit that might ruin the primer coat. Next, pieces such as arms and legs should be marked "L" or "R" on the inside to avoid future confusion.

Your kit parts will have a lot of excess plastic around the edges called "flash." You'll need a hair drier to soften the plastic so you can trim it off. Then use a hobby knife carefully to cut off the flash. Be careful—with hot plastic and a sharp knife you run the risk of cutting into either the kit or (even worse) yourself.

Armholes and legholes need to be carefully carved out as well. Don't follow the mold line exactly, but leave 1/16" extra around the holes and then insert pieces to see how they fit. If they're too tight, lightly trim the hole until you have the fit you want.

Leave a little excess when cutting arm and leg holes

Now that the flash is trimmed and the holes cut, you should repair any air bubbles in the plastic. Air bubbles appear as small pinholes or larger holes in the plastic's surface. Mix green putty and lacquer thinner until it has a liquid texture, then apply it over the pinholed surface with an old paint brush. Let it dry (check the putty tube for instructions. We find that two to three hours are usually adequate) and smooth with wet sandpaper.

Big air bubbles are more difficult to cover. Use your hobby knife to enlarge the hole slightly, then fill with two-part epoxy putty (we recommend Milliput). Let it dry for at least a full day and sand with wet sandpaper.

Because vinyl kits are hollow, they tend to be extremely light and may need a balance of some sort to remain upright. You may want to pour a small amount of plaster into the feet. For larger kits, fill the legs with dry sand and top it with plaster.

Construction

At last you can begin to construct your kit. Decide whether you want your kit to move or remain in a fixed position. Remember, once the kit is glued together it will become almost impossible to take apart without irreparable damage.

For armholes and legholes, pull out your trusty hair drier and heat the ends where they will join the body of the kit. When soft, gently insert. As the plastic cools, it will stiffen in place. Use CA glue with a precision tip to glue the two parts together—unless, of course, you've decided that you want a poseable kit.

Priming

Now that you've put your kit together, you'll want to prime the kit so you can paint it. Vinyl kits may need a different sort of primer than resin kits, since not all types of primer will adhere to the vinyl's surface. PRIME AND PAINT YOUR KIT IN A WELL-VENTILATED AREA ONLY!

Following the instructions on the can, spray your primer on a large piece of cleaned excess flash. If it remains tacky you'll have to experiment with different types of primer.

Painting

Now that your primer is dry you can begin to paint your kit. (For a complete breakdown on model kit painting, see Animag No. 9.)

Now that you've mastered resin and vinyl kits, you probably want to know how your favorite kits are made. Next time, we'll cover the evolution of the plastic-injection kit. ■

Animated Plastic New Releases

Musashiya
Lum, Rumiko Takahashi's most popular character, from the hit comic and TV series *Urusei Yatsura* (Those Obnoxious Aliens). Kit is 1/6th scale resin cast.

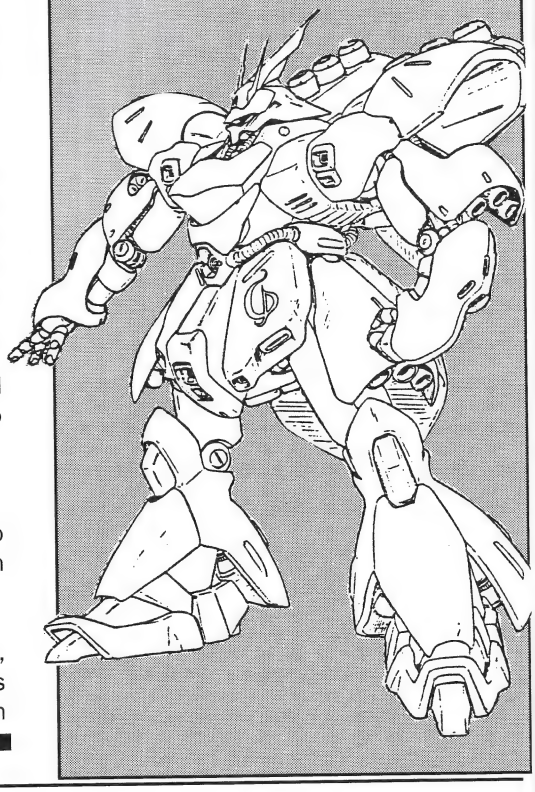
Max Factory
One of the last kits in the 145 kit prepainted series, the 1/12 scale Guyver Three, from the hit comic and OAV series *Bio-Booster Guyver.*

Kaiyodo
From the Tetsuo Hara and Buronson hit comic *Fist of the North Star.* Kenshiro is cast in 1/8th scale soft vinyl.

Wave
A 1/100 scale Sazabi from the popular Sunrise feature film *Char's Counterattack.* This kit is a combination of metal, soft vinyl and injected plastic.

B-Club
A soft vinyl 1/35 scale Zero from the hit TV series, *Patlabor.*

Volks
The Ashura Temple from Mamoro Nagano's hit comic, *The Five Star Stories.* Kit is 1/100 scale and is made of resin.



ANIMAG's Big *Five Star* Giveaway

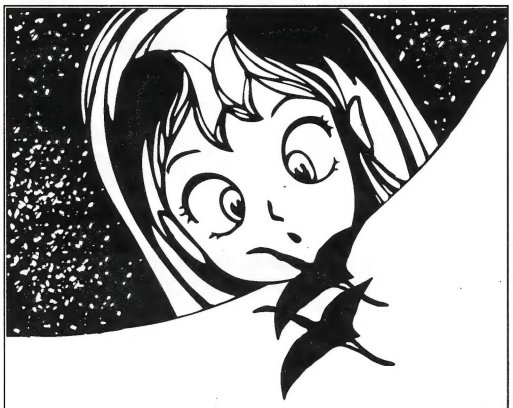
Five lucky readers will win one of five fabulous *Five Star* prizes when they send in a postcard (or 3" x 5" index card) with their name, address and telephone number to:

ANIMAG's Fabulous *Five Star* Giveaway
P.O. Box 31492
San Francisco, CA 94131

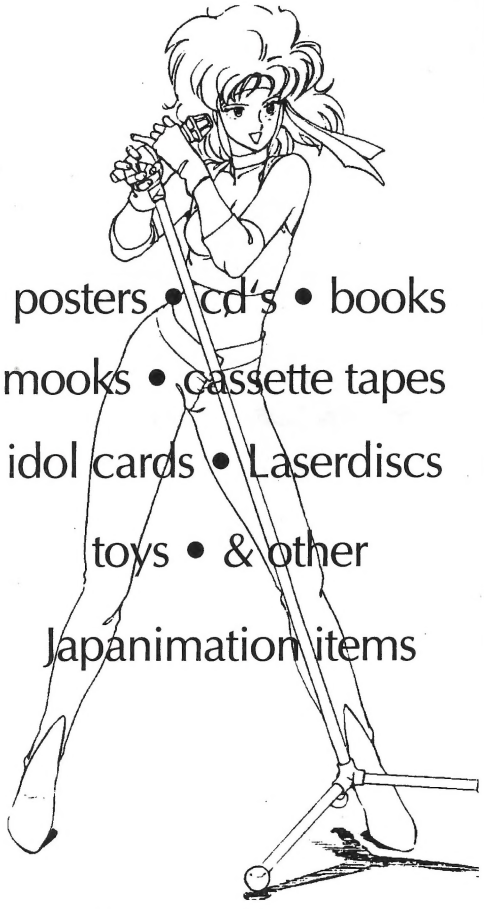
Entries must be received **no later than** July 30th, 1991. One entry per person, please. Winners will be announced in Issue No. 13.

* Five Star Stories *theatrical feature videotape*
* Joker 3100 *illustration book*
* *One of three original Mamoru Nagano signboards*

JOKER 3100



NIKAKU
animart



posters • cd's • books
mooks • cassette tapes
idol cards • Laserdiscs
toys • & other
Japanimation items

(408) 971•2822
615 N. 6th St.
SAN JOSE, CA. 95112
FAX (408) 971•0856

Next Issue:

Science Ninja Team Gatchaman

Legend of the Galactic Heroes

An Interview with Carl Macek

Plus

Legend of Heavenly Sphere Shurato

Crusher Joe

Blue Comet SPT Layzner

SCIENCE FICTION CONTINUUM

Catalogue Of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror on Video and Audio

AKIRA

THE MOVIE

AKIRA:THE MOVIE - This is it! The Japanese animated movie based on the hugely successful graphic novel series. This science fiction spectacular about a post-holocaust Tokyo is complete, letterboxed, recorded in stereo, and in English. 1990 *$29.99*

AKIRA PRODUCTION REPORT - This hour long documentary brings you into the animation studio to see the state-of-the-art techniques used to bring AKIRA to the screen. There are some great insights into the characters that make the movie even more enjoyable. 1990 *$24.99*

Buy both videos for $49.99

AKIRA CD SOUNDTRACK $17.99

The best in JAPANIMATION

ASTROBOY ***$24.99 ea***
#1 Birth Of Astroboy/Monster Machine
#2 One Million Mammoth Snails/Terrible Time Machine
#3 Super Brain/Mystery Of The Amless Dam
#4 Magic Punch Card/Great Rocket Robbery

CAPTAIN HARLOCK #1 ***$29.99***
Above The Lake/Flying From The Unknown/
A Woman Who Burns Like Paper

STAR BLAZERS

$14.99 per volume
$185 for a set of 13 tapes
SEARCH FOR ISCANDAR - Volumes 1-13
THE COMET EMPIRE - Volumes 14-26
THE BOLAR WARS - Volumes 27-39

Japanese Videos with English subtitles

APPLESEED*	***$34.99***	***BLACK MAGIC****	***$34.99***
DANGAIO	***$34.99***	***DOMINION*** **	***$34.99***
GUNBUSTER 1	***$34.99***	***GUNBUSTER 2****	***$34.99***
GUNBUSTER 3*	***$34.99***	***MADOX 01***	***$39.99***
RIDING BEAN	***$34.99***		

** available 6/91 ** available 8/91*

ROBOTECH

ROBOTECH: NEW GENERATION ***$29.99 ea***
#1 Invid Invasion/Lost City/Lonely Soldier Boy
#2 Survival/Curtain Call/Hard Times
#3 Paper Hero/Eulogy/Genesis Pit
#4 Enter Marlene/Secret Route/Fortress
Four more tapes will be available this year

Features dubbed in English $19.99 each

WARRIORS OF THE WIND
TECHNO POLICE
DEFENDERS OF THE VORTEX
SPACE FIREBIRD
MACROSS: CLASH OF THE BIONOIDS
VENGEANCE OF THE SPACE PIRATE
REVENGE OF THE NINJA WARRIOR
LOCKE THE SUPERPOWER
BATTLE FOR MOON STATION DALLOS

ZILLION

The animation studio that brought you ROBOTECH now brings you this five part series about the alien invasion of a colonial planet in the 24th century. Their only hope are the trained warriors - the White Knights - and the alien Zillion Weapons.
$14.99 each ***$70 for all five***

#1 They Call Me J.J.
#2 Hang Fire
#3 Split Second Chance
#4 Target The White Knights
#5 Judgement Call

Call toll-free to order - 1-(800) 232-6002

All our tapes are brand new and factory sealed!

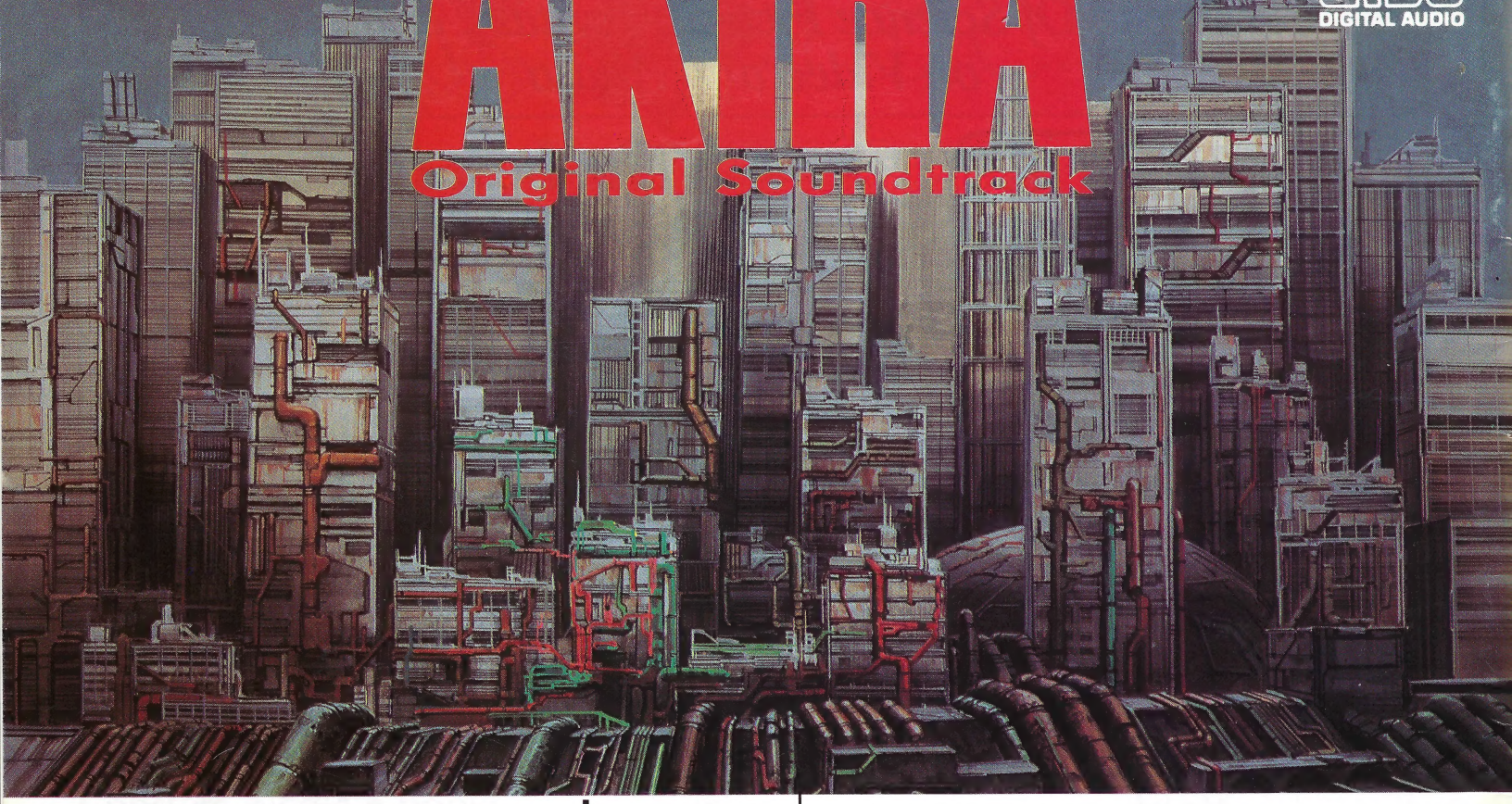
We accept Mastercard & Visa. We ship to the USA and Canada. Shipping charges for continental US: 1 tape -$4 2 tapes - $6 $1.50 each additional tape. PR, AK, and HI shipping charges: 1 tape - $7 2 tapes - $9 $1.50 each additional tape. Canada call (908) 755-2331. Canada delivery charges for Ontario, Montreal, Regina, Saskatoon, Vancouver, Victoria, Calgary, Edmonton, and immediate areas - 1 tape $10 $1 each additional tape. Other areas please call. US currency only! Please allow three to six weeks for delivery. Send $1 for a complete catalogue to: S & J Productions P.O.Box 154 Colonia, N.J. 07067

US Renditions
A Division of
Nippon Shuppan Hanbai U.S.A. Inc.

JVC
COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

AKIRA

Original Soundtrack



BOOKS NIPPAN

US Renditions
1123 DOMINGUEZ STREET
SUITE K CARSON CA 90746

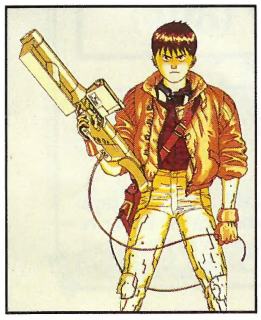
$17.95
SUGGESTED
RETAIL PRICE

BOOKS NIPPAN
Fan Club Price
$15.95

In 1982, Katsuhiro Otomo unleashed a comic series that would revolutionize the way Japan and the world would view comics forever. The art work and storytelling were light years ahead of anything of it's time. The comic series was called AKIRA.

In 1988, Otomo developed the animated film masterwork AKIRA which was based on his epic comic series. The film attained a look that contemporary live-action filmmakers could only dream of achieving. AKIRA, THE MOVIE, like it's comic counterpart, redefined the parameters of it's genre.

In 1991, we are proud to present the CD soundtrack for one of the most important animated films of our time. THE AKIRA ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK redefines and leaps beyond any conventional film soundtracks, and is an exotic mixture of Indonesian, Japanese, African, Asian and European musics. The music of AKIRA ranges from the exciting to the ethereal. The soundtrack fully captures the action, violence, intensity and vision of AKIRA.



Shoji Yamashiro and the 200 member Ethnic/Choral group known as the Geinoh Yamashirogumi have mastered the art of creating highly complex vocal rhythm patterns that are the ultimate fusion of humanity and technology. The 12 page CD booklet contains rare and exclusive information on Shoji Yamashiro, Katsuhiro Otomo, the Geinoh Yamashirogumi, and the film AKIRA.

This soundtrack is destined to make a profound impact on the world of film and ethnic music. Take a daring step into the Neo Avant-Garde cyberethnic world of AKIRA!

■ ORDER FORM ■

QTY	TITLE	PRICE RETAIL	MEMBER PRICE	TOTAL
	AKIRA Original Soundtrack	$17.95	$15.95	

Sub-Total	
CA Res. add 6.75% Sales Tax	
Shipping	
TOTAL	

Please Print CLEARLY.

Charge Card Orders: VISA/MC ONLY

Card # _____

Expiration Date _____

Name on Card (Print) _____

Signature _____

Tel # (___) _____ Fan Club # BA- _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____

SHIPPING and ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

Please send check or money order, payable to: **BOOKS NIPPAN.**
ALL ITEMS SENT BY U.P.S., please wait 4-6 weeks. No C.O.D. orders. (U.P.S. exceptions, P.O., APO, FPO, Box addresses will be shipped via 4th Class, U.S. Postal Service)

SHIPPING COST

CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES: 1 CD $3.50. Please add 1.00 for each additional CD.

ALASKA, HAWAII and PUERTO PICO: 1 CD $8.25. Please add $1.00 for each additional CD. 2nd day U.P.S. shipping only.

CANADA: Money Orders and Personal Checks in U.S. Dollars (payable through a U.S. branch of your Canadian Bank) only. Sent via U.P.S. ground service. 1 CD $7.50. Please add $1.00 for each additional CD. Return form or copy of form with payment to:

BOOKS NIPPAN
1123 Dominguez Street, Unit K, Carson, California 90746-3539
Attention: AKIRA